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Russell N. Bellows

THE

CHRISTIAN PIONEER:

INTENDED TO UPHOLD

THE GREAT DOCTRINES

OF

THE REFORMATION;

THE SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE,

THE RIGHT OF INDIVIDUAL JUDGMENT,

AND OF FEARLESS FREE INQUIRY.

"Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up."—JESUS.

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light."—PAUL.

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PREFACE.

THE friends of pure and scriptural Christianity, have long wished for the establishment of a periodical work in Scotland, entirely devoted to the promotion of Free Inquiry in Religion, the inculcation and defence of the doctrines of the New Testament, the consistent assertion of the sufficiency of the Scriptures, and the upholding of the sacred right of individual judgment. Whilst most of the sects into which the professing Christian world is divided, have their public channels of information, there was every reason for desiring that the professors of Christian Unitarianism in Scotland, should have their monthly publication likewise.

Various causes, which it is unnecessary to enumerate, have hitherto delayed the accomplishment of this wish. But the time seems now to have arrived, when such a publication would be likely to meet with adequate support. The spirit of the age is favourable to its success. Research and inquiry are abroad. Education is almost universally diffused. Mechanics' and similar institutions, for the attainment of general and scientific knowledge, are establishing. Innumerable publications, in almost every department of literature, are constantly issuing from the press. And the beneficial result is visible in the improvements which are taking place in every art and science.

Theology alone cannot long remain an exception. The human mind, when enlightened on other subjects, will not submit to implicit belief even in religion. It will dare to exercise the noblest prerogative with which the Creator has endowed his creatures, to

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reason and think for itself. Untrammelled by the traditions of frail and fallible humanity, undismayed by the censures of the bigot and the fanatic, retarded not by the obstacles with which interest, and prejudice, and error, would stay its progress to a conviction and open profession of the Truth as it is in Jesus, the mind of every serious and conscientious believer in Christianity, will exercise that liberty with which Christ has made his disciples free—will prefer the pure Oracles of Heaven to the creeds and confessions of earth—and, leaving the rudiments of the world, will strive to bring all its belief, and all its practice, into obedience to the commandments of Christ.

To aid in this holy and benevolent work, will be the object of "THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER." It will zealously labour to promote the glorious principles of the Reformation, the sufficiency of Scripture, the right of individual judgment, and of fearless free inquiry. It will assist in the removal of that unsightly mass of corruption which the Reformation left untouched. It will strive to disinter the religion of Jesus from that grave of priestly authority and creed idolatry, in which it has for ages been almost hidden from the view of man; and it will thus accelerate its pure and perfect resurrection, that the Sun of Righteousness may again arise with healing under his wings.

"The Christian Pioneer" will, it is hoped, become a bond of union to the scattered believers in the strict Unity and essential, unpurchased benevolence of the Supreme Being; they will, by its means, learn the progress of their principles in various quarters of the world—explain and vindicate the views they really entertain on Christian doctrines—expose the misrepresentations of the ignorant—silence the alarms of the timid—remove the existing prejudices entertained against their faith—excite to inquiry—and become the heralds of that knowledge of the One true God the Father, and of Jesus Christ whom He has sent, which the Saviour declared to be life eternal.

"The Christian Pioneer" will not care for sectarian distinctions. In every party, its Editor can see good and virtuous men. The progress of Truth, and not the mere triumph of a sect, will be his governing motive. But in the purer and nobler views of God and his Religion, which he believes it is his happiness to possess, he has received a treasure he is afraid to hoard, and in the power and opportunity which the present period offers for disseminating them—"talents" he dare not wrap up in a napkin and bury in the earth. He feels it his bounden duty, by the best means he can command, to introduce these views to other minds, and to recommend them to other hearts. Whilst, therefore, the Editor of "The Christian Pioneer" will ever strive that this publication shall evince respect and esteem for the virtuous and the good of every sect and party, he will, at the same time, hold no compromise with what he deems to be error. "The Christian Pioneer" will be the determined opponent of intolerance and bigotry, whether exhibited by Catholic against Prostestant, Protestant against Catholic, Protestants among themselves, or all of them united against the Unbeliever. These it will strive to uproot, together with the ignorance and error which produced them, and to prepare the way for the cultivation and reception of the pure doctrines and morality of the Saviour of the world. The only weapons that will be used, however, will be reason, argument, persuasion, and Scripture; and with these, "The Christian Pioneer" will strive to fight, with earnestness and perseverance, the good fight of faith.

The Editor was enabled to follow up the Prospectus, by commencing the publication much sooner than he had anticipated, in consequence of the support he was promised; and he now sincerely thanks his numerous friends, contributors, and subscribers, for the manner in which they have redeemed their pledge of assistance. No effort will be spared, on the part of the Editor, to render the Magazine worthy their continued countenance, and instrumental in promoting the progress of pure and undefiled Chris-

tianity. Its circulation must depend mainly upon their combined exertions; and the good it has already, he trusts, effected, will, he is persuaded, be a sufficient inducement to them, to aid its still further improvement and extension.

The contest in which "The Christian Pioneer" is engaged is peculiarly difficult, in consequence of the nature of the situation in which its efforts are put forth. Calvinism has, in this country, taken such deep root—it is so closely associated with the memory of revered ancestors, and the most glorious of patriotic struggles, so entwined with the recollections of infancy, and confirmed by the power of education and habit—that every attempt to uproot from the mind, what the nurse, and what the priest has taught, must necessarily be an arduous task. It is a task, however, to which, as it seems to the Editor, his duty to God and man impels him, and difficult though it be, the approbation of the wise and good will cheer his labours, and will nerve him on to the removal of error, and prejudice, and worldly mindedness, and indifference, until the way shall be cleared for the healing rays of the Sun of righteousness, to light up the cheerful and glowing piety of Christianity in place of the morose and depressing gloom of Calvinism, and to pour the glories of God's benevolence over the minds and hearts of his creatures, that no longer dreading Him as their foe, and cowering from his wrath, they may bless him as their Friend, and love him as their Father.

Glasgow, August, 1827.

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THE

CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

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The Doctrines of the Reformation.

THE Reformation was undoubtedly the most important event, as it regards the freedom, improvement, and happiness of man, that has occurred since the original promulgation of Christianity. There is a striking similarity of circumstances in the two events. Was Christianity preceded by the long and gloomy night of ignorance? The Reformation was immediately consequent on what are emphatically termed "the dark ages." Was the one the day-star from on high, to exhilarate the drooping spirit of mortality? The other was the dawn of the morning of the mental resurrection. Was the first the service of perfect freedom? The last was a calling to liberty, and the glad shout was re-echoed from many a land. Was the former an emancipation from the authority of lords many? The latter was an attempt to wrench the yoke of bondage from the souls of men. Was the religion of the Saviour calculated to make men think and reason, and to animate them to virtuous exertion, by ushering them into the glorious liberty of the children of God? The efforts of Wickliffe, of Huss, and of Luther, were well adapted to bring men from darkness to light, and, instead of crouching like slaves before the frowns of vindictive ecclesiastical tyranny, to teach them to vindicate their privileges, as beings created in the Almighty's image. Did the Eternal God put his seal to the one, by enabling his messengers to work miracles, and signs, and mighty wonders? The finger of the Most High is not less visible in the support of the other, by the admirable adaptation of circumstances and events which preceded and accompanied the Reformation. The invention of an art, the most

useful and beneficial to man,—an art, which exalts him from a mere fugitive and shadowy thing, a phantom of an hour, into a dweller amidst the occurrences of former days, and makes him conversant with the thoughts and actions of the illustrious, who now are mouldering in the dust,—an art, which, "falling like dew upon a thought, produces that which makes thousands, perhaps millions, think,"—an art, which, as one of the priests, wise in the wisdom of this world, declared, on its production, must be destroyed, or it would ultimately destroy them!—the invention of Printing, was a mighty engine in favour of the Reformation. By its means, the new opinions were rapidly spread; *that* increased knowledge, and knowledge again operated in favour of all that was good, and just, and right.

Other circumstances also aided the goodly work of the Reformation. The minds of men were beginning to expand, their eyes were opening. "The impolitic violence of some Popes—the scandalous lives of others—the shameless licentiousness of their court and their capital—the corrupt manners of the clergy—the ignorance and effrontery of several orders of mendicants, the faithful satellites of the Holy See—the seventy years' captivity at Avignon—the schism of forty other years which followed it, in which two and sometimes three Popes appeared, each having a party, abusing and excommunicating each other, loading each other with the most revolting insults, and reproaching each other with the lowest vices—unexpected disclosures, which covered both rivals with ignominy at the same time—the exactions of every description, but particularly the indulgences, a monstrous abuse of the most monstrous of powers—the intolerance and cruelties of the Inquisition"—were deeply sowing the seeds of discontent and rebellion in the minds of the free spirits of the age. When the opportunity presented itself for unfurling the banners of intellectual freedom, they were prepared for action. The power which ruled with despotic sway over the heritage of God, had its foundations in human opinion, and these had been cemented by force and intrigue. As long as it could be shrouded in mystery, 'twas well. "Still your fingers on your lips, I pray!" But when once its former votaries, and sometime bond-slaves, began to think, then the veil was rent. "To doubt its rights, was to take them away; to probe its foundations, was to sap them; to examine, was to destroy."

The phrase, "the doctrines of the Reformation," is one of high-sounding import. It is one in very current use by some religious denominations, who seem fond of confining Christianity within their own pale. It is one which carries with it a great degree of influence. The human mind is so much swayed by the authority of names, and the principal leaders in the work of the Reformation, were in general so well deserving of the homage and admiration of their fellow-creatures, that, if it can be shown they were banded together for the support of the peculiar opinions of any one religious party, such a circumstance would, in the judgment of numbers, give a stamp of authority to the principles professed. "Once connect the admiring ideas and grateful feelings excited by the mention of the Reformation, with a particular system of doctrines, and you cast a glory around the system, which conciliates those who would otherwise be shocked by its intrinsic repulsiveness." Trinitarians and Calvinists, aware of this advantage, have assumed the exclusive use of the phrase, "the doctrines of the Reformation," as alone applicable to their peculiar views.

The great leaders and promoters of the Reformation, at different periods, were, John Wickliffe in England, John Huss in Bohemia, Jerome of Prague, Luther in Saxony, Zwinglius in Switzerland, Savanarola in Italy, Servetus and Calvin in Geneva, Socinus in Poland, and John Knox in Scotland. Were these men united in one common belief on Christian doctrine and practice? Were they all advocates for the peculiar doctrines and discipline which now distinguish the Church of England? Did they universally insist on the five points of Calvinism? Did Arminianism number all of them amongst its adherents? Was Socinianism the prevailing sentiment? Did they all implicitly give in to the peculiar opinions and forms of church government, which were adopted by Luther? Or did they range themselves under the pure and sacred standard of Christian Unitarianism? Not one of these suppositions is agreeable to the real facts of the case. There were very great differences in religious sentiment and in church discipline, among these illustrious spirits: but, with a single exception, they all acted together in the arduous effort of overturning a despotism which laid the minds and bodies of mankind alike prostrate at its feet. It seems probable, there was a tacit compact among the

earliest of them, to leave for discussion, many of the comparatively less momentous points of doctrine, till some future period, when the destiny of the world, either for liberty or slavery, should have been determined. And there was wisdom in the resolution. So gross was the ignorance that prevailed—so abject the bondage in which the mind was enchained—so deep-rooted were the prejudices of the great mass of Christendom, that it would have been impossible to have roused men all at once from the deepness of their lethargy. And the attempt, had any one been disposed to make it, would very probably have retarded, instead of accelerated, the accomplishment of their most ardent wishes; and would have excited against them, the indignation and all the power of the Pontifical Tyrant, as well as the enmity of their coadjutors in the emancipation of mankind. This was evidenced in the conduct of Calvin towards Servetus. 'Twas enough for half a dozen individuals, armed with no other force than truth, wielding no other weapons but argument and persuasion, to induce many millions of people to reject the doctrine of transubstantiation—the belief that the great and Eternal God, he who filleth immensity with his presence, can be compressed into a wafer, and be mouthed and swallowed by the creatures of his own formation! 'Twas enough, that half a dozen men induced as many millions to spurn the spiritual bondage, which had so long enthralled them; and to exercise their rational powers on every subject, and search and judge of the Scriptures for themselves. 'Twas enough, that they had influence sufficient to cause them to protest against the abomination of indulgences, to scout the sale and traffic of the means of man's salvation, after these dogmas had been rooted in the world's mind for centuries. These glorious deeds they did accomplish; and for these, their memories shall be held in everlasting remembrance. Though Balak may curse, we will rise up, and call them blessed; yea, and they shall be blessed.

These, then, and these only, are the doctrines worthy to be denominated, "the doctrines of the Reformation," the great doctrines, in maintaining which, all the Reformers were agreed:—the denial of the doctrine of transubstantiation; the rejection of the impious and profligate sale of indulgences; the free circulation of the Scriptures to the people; the sufficiency of those Scriptures, with the indi-

vidual right of the people to exercise their own judgment on the contents. It was the bold, and fervent, and persevering assertion of these cardinal points, that excited almost a volcanic eruption of mind throughout Christendom; and gave such a blow to priestly usurpation, as it has never since, and, we trust, never will recover.

This view of the genuine doctrines of the Reformation, is not peculiar to ourselves. It was asserted, long since, by the celebrated Chillingworth:—"By the Religion of Protestants," he observes, "I do not understand the doctrine of Luther, or Calvin, or Melancthon—nor the Confession of Augusta or Geneva—nor the Catechism of Heidelberg—nor the Articles of the Church of England—no, nor the harmony of Protestant Confessions;—but that wherein they all agree with a greater harmony as a rule of their faith and actions, that is, the Bible. The Bible, I say, the Bible only, is the Religion of Protestants."

(To be Continued.)

ADDRESS, *delivered at the laying of the Corner-Stone of the Second Congregational Unitarian Church, New-York, November* 24, 1825.—BY WILLIAM WARE, *Minister of the First Congregational Church.*

IT is a good custom, that when about to lay the first stone of a building to be dedicated to God and his worship, we assemble together and ask his blessing on the work; and that, to those who are standing around, we declare the motives by which we are actuated, and explain the principles of that Christian faith in which we commence so interesting a labour.

We begin, then, the building of this house of prayer, that the increasing numbers of those who are believers in the strict unity of God, and lovers of real Christian liberty, may have a convenient place where they may gather themselves together, and unite in the solemnities of social worship—where they may pray to the only God, through the only Mediator—where they may hear the doctrine of Christ preached, as they think, in its first simplicity, and where they may be built up together in the knowledge and obedience of the truth as it is in Jesus. With the greater attention that is daily given by Christians of every name, to the discovery of truth and the detection of error,

and with the increase of our city, it has necessarily happened, that the number of Unitarian believers has greatly multiplied, and that more ample accommodations for religious worship are needed. It is to meet this want, that we have begun to lay the foundation of this house of prayer. When, five years ago, the building of the First Congregational Church was commenced in this place, it was little thought, that in so short a time the erection of a second would become necessary. But through the blessing of God on the cause of pure Christianity, the most ardent anticipations of those who first entered into this field of honourable labour, have been more than answered; and we hope and pray, that before an equal period shall have elapsed, through the continued blessing of heaven, another will have been begun and completed.

To those who stand here, and some of whom may be ignorant of the principles of that Christian faith which we profess, and in behalf of which we begin this church, to them and to all who are here present, I would say, that we lay this stone—this corner-stone of a Christian temple, in the firm and happy belief of one God, the Father, almighty, wise, just, good, and merciful—the God of our lives, and the God of our salvation. Rejecting, as the inventions of a benighted age of the church, all distinction of person in the Deity, and all ideas of his character that do not comport with the parental relation which he sustains to his creatures, we here begin a house, where God may be worshipped as the only God, the Father, without equal, without partner, through faith in Jesus Christ, his well-beloved Son, our Saviour and Redeemer. Believing thus, as we think, on most certain warrant of Holy Scripture, we look up with humble confidence for the blessing of Almighty God on our undertaking.

We lay this stone—as joyful believers in Jesus Christ; as believers in the *divinity of his mission*—in the supreme authority of his doctrine—in the miracles which he wrought by the power of God, in confirmation of the truths he uttered—as believers in his prophetical and mediatorial character—that he is the only true prophet of God, that his religion is the only one that has God for its author, and the true happiness of man for its end—that all the commands, precepts, and institutions of Jesus, have the force and obligation of divine commands, precepts, and institutions—that he is the only appointed medium of approach to God

by prayer—that in his name, all acceptable worship must be offered up—that the rejection of him, is the rejection of God—that they who despise him, despise him who sent him. And we hope, that they who believe thus in Christ, will, here, long enjoy a holy and happy communion, through him, with the Father of their spirits—that their faith will here receive new strength—their good principles be confirmed and settled—their virtuous habits established—their devout affections enlivened and purified—that this house will indeed be to them the house of God, and the gate of heaven.

We lay this stone—in a belief of the Christian doctrine of a resurrection from the dead, and of a state of righteous retribution beyond the grave—in the belief, that all they, who, according to the light they have, lead virtuous and devout lives, shall, through the infinite mercy of God, declared in Jesus Christ, be received to eternal life and joy—and that the unjust—all they who despise the riches of the goodness, forbearance, and long-suffering of God, shall be reserved unto the day of judgment, to be punished.

We lay this stone—as believers in the divine authority of the Sacred Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. We believe these books to contain the whole will of God, as it was revealed to the Jews by his prophets; and to the world, by Jesus Christ his Son. The Bible is the rule of our faith: its chapters and verses are the articles of our creed—the Bible is the rule of our conduct—the Bible is the charter of our immortal hopes. With this volume open in our hands, and reading as we go, we walk fearlessly through the world; sure that it will guide us right in the midst of duty and trial, and lead us at last to the desired haven. We rejoice in our possession of this blessed book—we thank God for its gift—and it is our fervent and constant prayer, that the time may soon come, when all men in all parts of the earth shall possess it, understand it, and obey it.

We begin this church, as practical believers and defenders of the great Protestant principle of the right of private judgment in matters of faith. We yield up our right to understand and interpret the sacred Scriptures for ourselves, and to believe as we see evidence to preponderate this way or that, to no man or number of men, to no Church or Council, Synod or Assembly. We think we are answerable to God alone for the faith we adopt, or the

faith we reject, and that man has no power to meddle in the case. And we trust, that, from this place no man or woman will be denounced for their faith in Christ, be that faith what it may. And ere one such anathema should be uttered within these walls, we pray God that they may crumble to their foundations.

We build this church in perfect charity, we hope, with Christendom and the world—for we build it as Christians; and Christians should love not only one another, but mankind. We wish, indeed, that our own peculiar opinions should every where prevail, for we believe them to be the pure, undoubted truth of God; but we would not make one convert by violence, or the sacrifice of peace. An overheated zeal has been a principal source of the miseries the church has endured. Christian sects have been willing to propagate their opinions at any cost, from mistaken ideas of their importance. They have forced, not followed Providence. May we avoid their error; and, though persuaded that our opinions are true, and important as true, and must ultimately prevail, let us not hasten too fast, but wait the fit concurrence of times and circumstances. God watches over his truth as he does over his material creation, and, in his own time and in his own way, will raise it to honour and a universal empire.

And now, brethren, I use the words of another, on a similar occasion:—Let us depart from this spot—from this moment holy ground, set apart henceforth from ordinary uses, and consecrated to things divine. Where the heavens now swell above us, declaring their Maker's glory, shall soon be interposed a roof of human workmanship, beneath which shall be declared the bright glory of his redeeming love. It shall intercept the light of yonder sun, whose beams shall no more fall upon this place; but the more reviving beams of the sun of righteousness shall rest here without a cloud. The dews of night shall come down upon this spot no more, and the winds of the ocean shall henceforth be excluded; but the dews of divine grace, as we trust, shall plenteously visit it, and the gentle breathings of the Holy Spirit, shall never cease to shed upon it life and peace. And from this place, where now, perhaps for the first time, the voice of Christian worship has ascended to Heaven, there shall go up, generation after generation, to the end of time, incense and a pure offering from multitudes of humble and believing hearts.

REVIEW.

(BY DR. CHANNING.)

A Treatise on Christian Doctrine, compiled from the Holy Scriptures alone, by John Milton.

THE discovery of a work of Milton, unknown to his own times, is an important event in literary history. The consideration, that we of this age are the first readers of this treatise, naturally heightens our interest in it; for we seem in this way to be brought nearer to the author, and to sustain the same relation which his cotemporaries bore to his writings. The work opens with a salutation, which, from any other man, might be chargeable with inflation; but which we feel to be the natural and appropriate expression of the spirit of Milton. Endowed with gifts of the soul, which have been imparted to few of our race, and conscious of having consecrated them through life to God and mankind, he rose without effort or affectation to the style of an Apostle:—"JOHN MILTON, TO ALL THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST, AND TO ALL WHO PROFESS THE CHRISTIAN FAITH THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, PEACE, AND THE RECOGNITION OF THE TRUTH, AND ETERNAL SALVATION IN GOD THE FATHER, AND IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST." Our ears are the first to hear this benediction, and it seems not so much to be borne to us from a distant age, as to come immediately from the sainted spirit, by which it was indited.

Without meaning to disparage the "Treatise on Christian Doctrine," we may say, that it owes very much of the attention which it has excited, to the fame of its author. We value it chiefly, as showing us the mind of Milton on that subject, which, above all others, presses upon men of thought and sensibility. We want to know, in what conclusions such a man rested, after a life of extensive and profound research, of magnanimous efforts for freedom and his country, and of communion with the most gifted minds in his own and former times. The book derives its chief interest from its author, and, accordingly, there seems to be a propriety in introducing our remarks upon it, with some notice of the character of Milton. We are not sure that we could have abstained from this subject, even if we had not been able to offer so good an apology

for attempting it. The intellectual and moral qualities of a great man, are attractions not easily withstood, and we can hardly serve others or ourselves more, than by recalling to him the attention, which is scattered among inferior topics.

In speaking of the *intellectual* qualities of Milton, we may begin with observing, that the very splendour of his poetic fame, has tended to obscure or conceal the extent of his mind, and the variety of its energies and attainments. To many, he seems only a poet, when, in truth, he was a profound scholar, a man of vast compass of thought, imbued thoroughly with all ancient and modern learning, and able to master, to mould, to impregnate with his own intellectual power, his great and various acquisitions. He had not learned the superficial doctrine of a later day, that poetry flourishes most in an uncultivated soil, and that imagination shapes its brightest visions from the mists of a superstitious age; and he had no dread of accumulating knowledge, lest it should oppress and smother his genius. He was conscious of that within him, which could quicken all knowledge, and wield it with ease and might; which could give freshness to old truths, and harmony to discordant thoughts; which could bind together by living ties and mysterious affinities, the most remote discoveries; and rear fabrics of glory and beauty, from the rude materials which other minds had collected. Milton had that universality, which marks the highest order of intellect. Though accustomed almost from infancy, to drink at the fountains of classical literature, he had nothing of the pedantry and fastidiousness which disdain all other draughts. His healthy mind delighted in genius, on whatever soil, or in whatever age, it burst forth and poured out its fulness. He understood too well the rights, and dignity, and pride of creative imagination, to lay on it the laws of the Greek or Roman school. Parnassus was not to him the only holy ground of genius. He felt, that poetry was as a universal presence. Great minds were every where his kindred. He felt the enchantment of Oriental fiction, surrendered himself to the strange creations of 'Araby the blest,' and delighted still more in the romantic spirit of chivalry, and in the tales of wonder in which it was embodied. Accordingly, his poetry reminds us of the ocean, which adds to its own boundlessness, contributions from all regions under heaven. Nor was it only in the

department of imagination, that his acquisitions were vast. He travelled over the whole field of knowledge, as far as it had then been explored. His various philological attainments, were used to put him in possession of the wisdom stored in all countries, where the intellect had been cultivated. The natural philosophy, metaphysics, ethics, history, theology, and political science of his own and former times, were familar to him. Never was there a more unconfined mind, and we would cite Milton, as a practical example of the benefits of that universal culture of intellect, which forms one distinction of our times, but which some dread as unfriendly to original thought. Let such remember, that mind is in its own nature diffusive. Its object, is the universe, which is strictly one, or bound together by infinite connexions and correspondences; and, accordingly, its natural progress is from one to another field of thought; and wherever original power, creative genius, exists, the mind, far from being distracted or oppressed by the variety of its acquisitions, will see more and more common bearings and hidden and beautiful analogies in all the objects of knowledge, will see mutual light shed from truth to truth, and will compel, as with a kingly power, whatever it understands, to yield some tribute of proof, or illustration, or splendour, to whatever topic it would unfold.

Milton's fame rests chiefly on his poetry, and to this we naturally give our first attention. By those who are accustomed to speak of poetry, as light reading, Milton's eminence in this sphere may be considered only as giving him a high rank among the contributors to public amusement. Not so thought Milton. Of all God's gifts of intellect, he esteemed poetical genius the most transcendant. He esteemed it in himself as a kind of inspiration, and wrote his great works with something of the conscious dignity of a prophet. We agree with Milton, in his estimate of poetry. It seems to us, the divinest of all arts; for it is the breathing or expression of that principle or sentiment, which is deepest and sublimest in human nature—we mean, of that thirst or aspiration, to which no mind is wholly a stranger, for something purer and lovelier, something more powerful, lofty, and thrilling, than ordinary and real life affords. No doctrine is more common among Christians, than that of man's immortality; but it is not so generally understood, that the germs or principles of

his whole future being, are *now* wrapped up in his soul as the rudiments of the future plant in the seed. As a necessary result of this constitution, the soul possessed and moved by these mighty though infant energies, is perpetually stretching beyond what is present and visible, struggling against the bounds of its earthly prison-house, and seeking relief and joy in imaginings of unseen and ideal being. This view of our nature, which has never been fully developed, and which goes farther towards explaining the contradictions of human life, than all others, carries us to the very foundation and sources of poetry. He who cannot interpret by his own consciousness, what we now have said, wants the true key to works of genius. He has not penetrated those sacred recesses of the soul, where poetry is born and nourished, and inhales immortal vigour, and wings herself for her heavenward flight. In an intellectual nature, framed for progress and for higher modes of being, there must be creative energies, power of original and ever-growing thought; and poetry is the form in which these energies are chiefly manifested. It is the glorious prerogative of this art, that it "makes all things new" for the gratification of a divine instinct. It indeed finds its elements, in what it actually sees and experiences in the worlds of matter and mind; but it combines and blends these into new forms and according to new affinities; breaks down, if we may so say, the distinctions and bounds of nature; imparts to material objects, life, and sentiment, and emotion, and invests the mind with the powers and splendours of the outward creation; describes the surrounding universe in the colours which the passions throw over it, and depicts the mind in those modes of repose or agitation, of tenderness or sublime emotion, which manifest its thirst for a more powerful and joyful existence. To a man of a literal and prosaic character, the mind may seem lawless in these workings; but it observes higher laws than it transgresses, the laws of the immortal intellect; it is trying and developing its best faculties; and in the objects which it describes, or in the emotions which it awakens, anticipates those states of progressive power, splendour, beauty, and happiness, for which it was created.

We accordingly believe that poetry, far from injuring society, is one of the great instruments of its refinement and exaltation. It lifts the mind above ordinary life, gives it a respite from depressing cares, and awakens the

consciousness of its affinity with what is pure and noble. In its legitimate and highest efforts, it has the same tendency and aim with Christianity; that is, to spiritualize our nature. True; poetry has been made the instrument of vice, the pander of bad passions; but when genius thus stoops, it dims its fires, and parts with much of its power; and even when poetry is enslaved to licentiousness or misanthropy, she cannot wholly forget her true vocation. Strains of pure feeling, touches of tenderness, images of innocent happiness, sympathies with what is good in our nature, bursts of scorn or indignation at the hollowness of the world, passages true to our moral nature, often escape in an immoral work, and show us how hard it is for a gifted spirit to divorce itself wholly from what is good. Poetry has a natural alliance with our best affections. It delights in the beauty and sublimity of outward nature and of the soul. It indeed portrays with terrible energy, the excesses of the passions; but they are passions which show a mighty nature, which are full of power, which command awe, and excite a deep though shuddering sympathy. Its great tendency and purpose is, to carry the mind beyond and above the beaten, dusty, weary walks of ordinary life;—to lift it into a purer element, and to breathe into it more profound and generous emotion. It reveals to us the loveliness of nature, brings back the freshness of youthful feeling, revives the relish of simple pleasures, keeps unquenched the enthusiasm which warmed the spring-time of our being, refines youthful love, strengthens our interest in human nature by vivid delineations of its tenderest and loftiest feelings, spreads our sympathies over all classes of society, knits us by new ties with universal being, and, through the brightness of its prophetic visions, helps faith to lay hold on the future life.

We are aware, that it is objected to poetry, that it gives wrong views and excites false expectations of life, peoples the mind with shadows and illusions, and builds up imagination on the ruins of wisdom. That there is a wisdom, against which poetry wars, the wisdom of the senses, which makes physical comfort and gratification the supreme good, and wealth the chief interest of life, we do not deny; nor do we deem it the least service which poetry renders to mankind, that it redeems them from the thraldom of this earth-born prudence. But,

passing over this topic, we would observe, that the complaint against poetry, as abounding in illusion and deception, is, in the main, groundless. In many poems, there is more of truth than in many histories and philosophic theories. The fictions of genius are often the vehicles of the sublimest verities, and its flashes often open new regions of thought, and throw new light on the mysteries of our being. In poetry, the letter is falsehood, but the spirit is often profoundest wisdom. And if truth thus dwells in the boldest fictions of the poet, much more may it be expected in his delineations of life; for the present life, which is the first stage of the immortal mind, abounds in the materials of poetry, and it is the office of the bard to detect this divine element among the grosser labours and pleasures of our earthly being. The present life is not wholly prosaic, precise, tame, and finite. To the gifted eye, it abounds in the poetic. The affections which spread beyond ourselves and stretch far into futurity; the workings of mighty passions, which seem to arm the soul with an almost superhuman energy; the innocent and irrepressible joy of infancy; the bloom, and buoyancy, and dazzling hopes of youth; the throbbings of the heart, when it first wakes to love, and dreams of a happiness too vast for earth; woman, with her beauty, and grace, and gentleness, and fulness of feeling, and depth of affection, and her blushes of purity, and the tones and looks which only a mother's heart can inspire;—these are all poetical. It is not true that the poet paints a life which does not exist. He only extracts and concentrates as it were, life's ethereal essence, arrests and condenses its volatile fragrance, brings together its scattered beauties, and prolongs its more refined but evanescent joys; and in this he does well; for it is good to feel that life is not wholly usurped by cares for subsistence, and physical gratifications, but admits, in measures which may be indefinitely enlarged, sentiments and delights worthy of a higher being. This power of poetry to refine our views of life and happiness, is more and more needed as society advances. It is needed to withstand the encroachments of heartless and artificial manners, which make civilization so tame and uninteresting. It is needed to counteract the tendency of physical science, which being now sought, not as formerly for intellectual gratification, but for multiplying bodily comforts, requires a new developement of imagina-

tion, taste, and poetry, to preserve men from sinking into an earthly, material, epicurean life. Our remarks in vindication of poetry, have extended beyond our original design. They have had a higher aim than to assert the dignity of Milton as a poet, and that is, to endear and recommend this divine art to all who reverence and would cultivate and refine their nature.

(To be Continued.)

What is a Unitarian?

This is a question often asked, and it shall be our business to give to it a plain and definite answer. It is an inquiry often made in no friendly spirit, but that will make no difference in our reply. It is an interrogation occasionally used by opponents to our principles, and the explanation which they usually give, is unfounded and incorrect. By this means, false views of our sentiments are held forth to deter the inquiring; and so horrific is the picture conjured up by those who should know better, that the uninformed are scared from examination, and are kept from doubting the faith of their forefathers, by the fear that there is a lion in the way. The ignorance so prevalent on this subject, would be inexplicable, were we not aware of the mighty force of educational prejudice, the authority of great names, the influence of interest, and the all-attractive power of an established faith.

The inquiry, What is a Unitarian? was not very long since made by the highest law-officer of Great Britain. In the debate on the Unitarian Marriage Bill, the Lord Chancellor is reported to have said, I should like to know what a Unitarian is? We have no hope that these pages will ever be perused by his Lordship; but we do hope they may be read by many an individual as likely to listen to the statement with seriousness, and as willing to pursue the inquiry with earnestness, and more likely to have his doubts removed, and more willing to make an open profession of an obnoxious faith.

The Unitarian Christian vindicates the use of reason in matters of a religious nature, as the only means which his Creator has given him to distinguish what is true from what is false, to detect the vain and futile pretensions of

the Prophet of Mecca, and gratefully to acknowledge the well-grounded and heaven-approved claims of the Son of God. He suffers not his godlike reason to rust in him unused, but freely employs it on every subject which can be of moment to the human mind, or can possibly affect the human heart. He is thankful to his Maker for his gracious gift, and desires ever to exercise it in his Creator's praise.

Believing, from the deductions which his intellectual faculties enable him to draw from the works of nature, and the appearances of the world, and the frame and constitution of man, that there is a God, the Unitarian Christian carefully investigates the evidences which are asserted to prove the divine origin of the Christian system; and he rises from that investigation, a firm and practical believer in its truth and heavenly original. Believing the New Testament to contain a perfect representation of Christian doctrines, he needs no creed to make it more so. The Bible only is the Unitarian Christian's Religion. The Bible is his Confession of Faith. The Bible is his Assembly's Catechism. The Bible is his alone standard of Christian faith and practice, the charter of the emancipation of mind from human thraldom and human error, the freehold of his rejoicing for himself and his heirs for ever.

Such being the fact, it follows from the nature of the human mind, and from the various circumstances in which different individuals are placed, and from the fearless free inquiry which is one of the distinctive marks of the Unitarian denomination, that there should be variations of opinion on some controverted points, among those who are called by our name. Such variations are, however, principally confined to the questions of Christ's pre-existence and simple humanity, universal restoration and limited punishment terminated by destruction, the subjects of baptism and church government. Taking as our guide, in reply to the question, What is a Unitarian? the opinions of the major portion of the denomination, we answer, that, in addition to the opinions on the use of reason and the sufficiency of the Scriptures, a Unitarian is one who maintains, That there is but One God, one in essence, one in person, even the Father, who is the benevolent Parent of all mankind, the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. The One God, even the Father, the Chris-

tian Unitarian believes to be the only proper object of religious worship; that every thing should be performed to his honour and glory; and that all prayers and praises should be offered to his sacred and undivided name, in the name and as the disciples of Jesus Christ.

In Jesus Christ, the Christian Unitarian believes, as the Messenger and the Prophet of the Almighty, the Messiah, the Christ, the Mediator, the Son of God, the Saviour of the World. The divinity of his mission he rejoices in, though the Scriptures constrain him to reject the deity of his person. Believing a Cause to be before the effect, the Sender to be greater than the sent, the Giver to be superior to the gift, the Anointer to be higher than the anointed, the Father to exist previously to the Son, the Christian Unitarian is compelled to acknowledge, in the words of Jesus, "that this is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." The Unitarian Christian, then, in other words, gladly acknowledges and believes in Jesus as the Son of God, but not as God the Son. He considers all he has taught, as coming from God; he receives his commands and relies on his promises, as the commands and promises of God. In his miracles, he sees the power of God; in his doctrines and precepts, he beholds the wisdom of God; and in his life and character, he beholds a bright display of every divine and social virtue. His hope of salvation, rests on the truths he has disclosed, and the means he has pointed out. He believes him to be entitled to his implicit faith, obedience, and submission; and he feels towards him all the veneration, love, and gratitude, which the dignity of his mission, the sublime purity of his character, and his sufferings for the salvation of men, justly demand. But he does not pay him religious adoration, because he thinks this would be derogating from the honour and majesty of the Supreme Being, who, his Saviour himself has told him, is the only proper object of worship, and would also be acting in direct opposition to the Saviour's express prohibition of worship to himself, the Son and Messenger of the Father.

Regarding the One God the Father as love, and love unbounded, as the source of compassion, the centre of beneficence, the Christian Unitarian maintains, that repentance and reformation are the only means of obtaining the Divine favour; that the Father of mercies required

no vicarious sacrifice to make him propitious to his creatures, because he never was otherwise; that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the World, by the means of his life, his doctrines, and his resurrection, purifying unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works. He believes, therefore, that without holiness no man shall see God; but he also maintains, that in every nation, he who feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him.

In the great day of the Lord Jesus, the Unitarian Christian believes, all men shall be raised from the dead, to receive the reward of the deeds done in the body, whether they have been good, or whether they have been evil. The chastisement of the wicked, he thinks, will be that which a wise and tender Father would bestow on his disobedient offspring—chastisement which would remove iniquity and implant virtue; and, consequently, that in the revolution of ages, all mankind shall, by suffering, be purified from shame and defilement—shall, through suffering, like their honoured Saviour, be made perfect—and thus, fitted for felicity, eternal and unbounded.

The effect of such views of human duty, and of Christianity, and of the Saviour, and of his God and Father, is to induce the Unitarian Christian to think no worse of any man, whatever may be the faith he clings to—to regard a wicked life as the only heresy—to loath the error which depresses the heart with gloom—and to detest the unrighteousness to which it may tend,—but still to love the erring, and be anxious for their benefit; and practically to believe, that if all the contending sects be careful to add to their faith, *charity*, their various supporters, though divided on earth, shall meet in heaven.

Such it is to be a Unitarian. Such the plain answer we would submit to the consideration of the honest and inquiring mind. Reader, decide not hastily; read your Bible with care and seriousness; judge for yourself; and may God's blessing be with you, and rest on your inquiries.

On Free Inquiry.

Almighty! thou in mortal heart hath plac'd
This thirst for Truth, unquenchable and free;
And shall we fetter that bless'd liberty,
By its own light through dark'ning ages trac'd?

Father! in mercy, be it not eras'd
That glorious charter of the free-born soul,
Never to bow, but to thy high control,
Nor be, by power of mortal yoke, abas'd.
This world's depression, we, elastic, spurn,
By its conflicting creeds, unchang'd in heart;
With our souls steadfast faith to thee we turn,
Father! to thee, who wilt not say, Depart:
Firm in thy trust, to search Truth's glorious ray,
Till on our darkness burst the living day.

Remarks on Mr. Haldane's View of the Religious State of the Continent, contained in the Second Review of the Conduct of the Directors of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

We need not inform our readers, that a storm is at present raging between the Directors of the British and Foreign Bible Society and the Edinburgh Committee. A party amongst the Presbyterians, have been seized with a sudden phrensy of horror and indignation against the Apocryphal Books; and they have unsparingly abused, and, we think, grossly misrepresented, the conduct and the motives of the London Committee, for circulating on the Continent the Apocrypha with the acknowledged Canon of Scripture. A little of that charity, which thinketh no evil —a little of that candour, which common benevolence dictates, would have given the London Committee credit for good intentions, in complying with the prejudices of the Continent respecting the Apocryphal Books. The question involves the circulation of the Bible in most of the European states. The dilemma was, Should they withhold a supply of the Word of Life, or should they comply with the prejudices of the Protestants on the Continent, and give them the Scriptures accompanied with other books, which, though not admitted within the Sacred Canon, have been, till within a few months, generally regarded as works containing many valuable and highly interesting historical details, and many admirable precepts of piety and virtue. Those who, till lately, received the Apocrypha into their pulpits, and admitted it amongst their families, all at once, discern that it is full of poison and inculcates the most pernicious doctrines! No epithets

are too strong, to express the newly imbibed abhorrence of the Apocrypha; no language is too coarse, to condemn the conduct—and no insinuations are too broad, to brand the motives—of the London Committee of Directors! This clamour, this incessant vituperation, appeared to us, at first, unaccountable. One might imagine, that some prying, deep-searching eye, had discovered the spirit of Asmodeus in every line, and that the very souls of all the inhabitants of the Continent, depended on the sudden withdrawal of these Books, some of which strongly, and in the most beautiful language, inculcate the importance of good works—of those carnal, legal acts, justice, mercy, charity, and long-suffering! Circumstances, however, have abated our surprise respecting the virulence of the attack, as we are led to believe, that much personal feeling exists, excited by the opposition which the Agents of the London Committee have given to some of the measures adopted to revive the dying cause of Calvinism. The emissaries of the Bible Society, who adopt the liberal plan of bestowing the Word of Life on all those who seem to stand in need of it, without inquiring into their peculiar religious sentiments, appear to have crossed the track of the emissaries of Calvinism. A considerable agent in this new continental crusade, seems to have met with these men, who presumed to act according to their liberal instructions, in opposition to his proselyting plans. Unaccustomed to control, he came home full of pious indignation against these allies "of the engineers of Satan," determined to let them know and feel, that within an Edinburgh conclave, his will is law. It is truly surprising, how great a matter a little fire kindleth. The whole *religious* world is in a ferment, and one individual has already produced a Second Review of the Conduct of the Directors of the British and Foreign Bible Society; and he seems still so full of the subject, that the consequences to himself and his friends may be deplorable, if he does not soon obtain another vent through the press. This Apocryphal controversy has introduced another, which, at first sight, appears to have no connection with the subject, but which, in reality, is the source of this violent dispute. Arminians, Arians, and Socinians, are, in most places on the Continent, intrusted with the management of the affairs connected with the Bible Society, because they are the principal and most influential persons. Calvinists and Calvinistic emissaries

have not been brought prominently forward. Dr. Steinkoff, and other agents of the Bible Society, would not submit to have their conduct guided by the gross misrepresentations of "tattlers and busy-bodies, idle persons, wandering about from house to house, speaking things which they ought not," but justly "considering it the height of presumption to pronounce judgment on the precise state of the religious views and opinions of any noblemen, clergymen, or gentlemen, which would require an intimacy of acquaintance, and an insight into the sanctuary of the heart;" and, therefore, not seconding the views of some violent proselytists, who would turn the world upside down to make one convert, they have brought upon themselves the wrath of a numerous party of Presbyterians, who have withdrawn all communication from the Parent Society, and represented the Continental coadjutors of the London Directors, to be enemies of Christianity—the violent opposers of the Gospel. A principal object of the pamphlet under consideration, seems to be, to heap obloquy on the London Committee, in consequence of their intercourse with the Unitarians of the Continent! The principle of the work is this,—You may judge of a man's character, from the sort of company which he keeps. The agents of the London Committee, intrust the management of their affairs on the Continent, to Unitarians; they join with them in the same work of disseminating the Scriptures, and they receive their deputies in London! Therefore, the London Directors are unworthy of trust; they are unprincipled men, and cannot prosper the work in which they are engaged! The Unitarians in England, through the gross misrepresentations of their opponents, are in great disrepute; their name, like that of the primitive Christians, is cast out as evil; and by some of the over-righteous, they are regarded, like Paul and the early disciples, as the offscouring of the earth. Mr. Haldane seems to imagine, that if he can make out, that the majority of the Protestants on the Continent, are unbelievers "in the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel," and that the agents of the British and Foreign Bible Society, are on familiar terms with these, he can sink them sufficiently low in the estimation of "*the Christians!*"

At present, our object is to consider that part of Mr. Haldane's pamphlet, which relates to the religious state of the Continent. We begin with expressing our decided

opinion, that this account abounds with gross misstatements, and manifests throughout, a temper directly opposed to the genuine spirit of the Gospel. Indeed, we have wondered, as we have gone along, at the exaggerations, the misrepresentations, the gross personality, the virulent and unfounded abuse which almost every page contains. The arrogance and presumption which it manifests, would not discredit the pretensions of the Papal chair; and the spirit of intolerance which it breathes, would suit the atmosphere of the inquisition. Had we not daily instances of the great misrepresentations, and foul calumnies which the opinions and practices of the English Unitarians suffer, we should not have believed it possible, that bigotry would lead its votaries so far astray from truth, justice, and candour. We are told, that the religious state of Germany is very deplorable. And then we have a confused account of the different grades of scepticism. It is evident, that our Author has no very clear notions of German theology, and that it would have been better had he spared himself the trouble of endeavouring to explain what he does not comprehend. We entirely disbelieve the assertion, that, "in several districts of Germany, the most numerous of all the theological parties denies a Revelation." And we deny, as a gross misstatement, that Socinianism is founded on the principle of rejecting or retaining whatever is agreeable or disagreeable to the fancy of the individual. He who passes sentence, before he has inquired into the nature of a case, is either a very unprincipled, or else a very weak and prejudiced judge. Though we are no Socinians, yet we have a feeling of indignation, that a man who emphatically styles himself a Christian, should, without inquiry, slander a numerous body of sincere disciples of Jesus, who value Christianity as the best gift of God to man, and who receive the Scriptures as containing the revealed will of God.

We pass over the extracts, garbled, we will venture to assert, from the works of some free-thinking German theologians. Germany has produced many very eminent Biblical critics, and, as might be expected, has educated some commentators who have indulged in a latitude of interpretation of the Sacred Oracles, which sound criticism will not justify. But the sceptical notions in the works of some of the German divines, are a necessary consequence of the gross corruptions of Christianity. "No

wonder, that, in many places, the churches are often seen in ruins," where the doctrines of Calvinism were once established as the pure doctrines of the Reformation. These sentiments are so revolting to common sense, and so widely opposed to the principles of reason, by which we judge of the truth of Revelation, and of the doctrines which it contains, that men of reflection, having, without examining carefully the Scriptures, identified Calvinism and Revelation, have rejected the latter for libelling, as they imagine, the God of Nature, and degrading the dignity of man. To what are we to attribute the wide spread of infidelity in Roman Catholic countries, but to the gross corruptions which are inculcated as the doctrines of the Scriptures. To the same cause, must we attribute the infidelity and scepticism which exist in some parts of Germany. But Mr. Haldane has presented us with a very exaggerated account; indeed, he has classed all Germany in unbelief, by including in this term, all those who do not maintain his peculiar sentiments. According to his vocabulary, every man who cannot utter his Shibboleth, is an enemy of the Gospel; and, judging from the temper of his work, we may conclude, that if he had the power, the Sibboleths would feel the sword of his spirit.

Halle is represented as the seat of infidelity! It appears to us, however, evident, from the statements which Mr. H. has inserted from men of his own faith, many of whom seem to be his agents, that this infidelity is merely a form of Christianity different from that which Mr. H. inculcates. The majority of believers are Unitarian Christians, some are Arians, and others may be of the denomination, Anti-supernaturalists. Although we firmly believe in the miracles which are recorded in the Bible, we should esteem it great presumption, to denominate those who attempt to explain some of them in a natural way, "unprincipled men, who are not Christians though they assume the name." These are hard sayings, and certainly are not dictated by the spirit of Christianity. Does this self-righteous sect, ever meet with that passage, "Judge not, that ye be not judged."

We are informed, that, at Hanover, there is more decency and caution, but not less hostility to the truth as it is in Jesus,—or, in other words, to the doctrines of Calvinism!

At Leipzig, it appears, things are still worse. "Not

one who preaches the truth; every thing is more heathenish than Christian;"—phraseology, from which we infer, that good works are more insisted on, as essential to salvation, than faith in the doctrines of Calvinism. "The Bible Society is totally in the hands of infidels!" Strange, indeed, that infidels should concern themselves respecting the dissemination of the Scriptures. Mr. H.'s infidels may, however, be the genuine disciples of Jesus Christ. All are infidels with him, who are not Calvinistic Methodists. "At Breslaw, there is only one Professor, whose system of Theology is Christian." Again, "Most Protestants in Germany are only such as oppose the errors and superstition of the Romish church, but are no more Christians than the most bigotted Pagans; *i. e.* they are not "*the Christians.*" "One may travel through Sweden, Norway, and Finland, and perhaps not find any thing like the Gospel in 20 parishes;" *i. e.* Mr. H.'s gospel; but you may find many sincere, modest professors of the doctrines which Jesus and his apostles taught. "Had it not been for that late memorable Mr. Hange, Christianity would long ago have been quite extinct in Norway." "In Finland, the Word of God is sadly opposed by men, who have the form of godliness, but deny the power thereof, by whom it is malignantly hated, and basely oppressed, and persecuted." These terms are *moderately* strong, to be applied by one Christian to his fellow Christians of a different denomination. Does the Bible of Mr. H. and his party, contain the passage, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth." Have the *Evangelicals* mutilated the Scriptures? From the unchristian spirit which they display towards other denominations of Christians, we might fairly infer, that they have been taking away from the Sacred Canon every passage which does not comport with their principles,—an accusation which they falsely bring against the Unitarians. Berlin, it seems, contains only four faithful ministers. "Besides these, none preach and live evangelically!" "The city of Dantzic, buried its last evangelical minister twenty years ago." "In Hungary, the people are little better than Heathens, either in refined scepticism or gross superstition!" In Holland, "those whose ears had been circumcised," perceived the operation of infidels, in cutting out slices of evangelical sentiment, in the new version of

Psalms! The circumcised are also greatly annoyed with a Theological Journal, entitled "Literary Exercises," conducted by the first pens in Holland, "which is a well known enemy to evangelical sentiments!" This work is, however, opposed by "the Johnson of Literature," and "the Milton of Poetry," *a Mr. B.* who, in the spirit of his sect, terms the Literary Exercises, the "Exercises in Slander." This Mr. B. of Leyden is quite a Boanerges. "He sounds the alarm the louder, the more the storm rages." He has gained never-withering laurels, from the conversion of a Jewish doctor and a Jewish lawyer. "This remarkable event happened some years ago." Remarkable, indeed, that Jews, staunch believers in the Divine Unity, should be converted to believe, that Jesus is the Almighty God, the Creator of the world; that the Holy Ghost is also the Almighty God; and that such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost. *Credat Judæus!* The heart-searching infallible heads of the true church, can find only *one* pious professor of theology, and only *two* pious students in Leyden! All have gone astray. "Arianism and Socinianism, have, during the last 25 years, made great progress in the academies and reformed churches!" The lawyer and physician are, however, busily at work. One relinquishes the dry study of the law, for the work of grace; and the other neglects the maladies of the body, for the cure of souls.

Let us proceed to France. Here, also, the whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint. The holy inquisitors, happily, however, divested of the engines of that infernal tribunal, pronounce, with the same disgusting arrogance and self-righteousness, on the faith and conduct of the French Protestants. But we will not tire our readers with a detail of the gross misstatements of the *Evangelical emissaries*. "Engineers of Satan," "poison of Socinianism," "ill-informed Arians, ignorant and prejudiced against the Gospel," are terms lavishly bestowed on all the Anti-Calvinists. "The dogmas of Geneva are openly taught," *i. e.* the doctrines of Unitarian Christianity. At Montauban, the Unitarian Professor, of course, "denies the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel." At this charge, the Professor may smile, because it is generally understood what the Calvinist means, by a person's denying the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, *i.e.* the doctrines of *his* creed;

but when a man, emphatically styling himself a Christian, publishes to the world, that a Professor of Theology "has no respect for the Word of God," and that "he treats it in the way of ridicule," the calumniated may justly feel indignant at the slanderer, and would be justified in using means to compel him to retract his malicious charge. It is not with such weapons, that the *pure* doctrines of the Gospel are disseminated. Learn of him, who was meek and lowly in heart, and who declared, that not he who *saith* Lord, Lord, have we not believed in thee, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he who *doeth* the will of my Father who is in heaven, who practises justice, mercy, and *truth*. The charge is absurd, it refutes itself. A Christian treat with ridicule and contempt the book on which are founded all his hopes of mercy and future bliss! Let this busy, censorious, prying, anathematizing sect, seriously examine their own hearts, their own faith, and their own conduct. They will have work enough before them. It is the province of Omniscience to form an estimate of the character of our fellow creatures. Let not these self-righteous, who say to every other, Stand off, for we are holier than thou, deceive themselves, with the notion that the overflowings of their religious zeal, is a sacrifice well-pleasing to God, and will atone for the want of the principal virtues in the Christian life. Let them remember, that there is a zeal without knowledge, without holiness, without charity. Let them remember, who hath said, that love is the fulfilling of the law; and that faith, and hope, and knowledge, without love, are but as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

Of the religious state of Geneva, we shall say a few words in our next number. It appears, that Mr. H. has given an account of it in a Letter to M. Chenevière, Pastor and Professor of Divinity in that place, whom he courteously styles "a determined enemy of the gospel." M. C. professes to be a sincere Christian, but he is a Unitarian; therefore, according to Mr. H.'s logic, he is a determined enemy of the Gospel. Many pages of Mr. H.'s pamphlet are occupied with an account of the persecution of some members of his sect. We shall hereafter refer to this. It seems clear, that the statements are much exaggerated; and the causes which led to this persecution are kept in the back ground. The Unitarians, however, are not implicated in the harsh measures which appear to have

been adopted against the Calvinistic Methodists. These proceed "from the station famed for orthodoxy," from the Pastors of Lausanne, who had broken off all communication with the Unitarian Ministers of Geneva. Of M. Malan's *dreadful* persecution, to the severities of which his personal appearance and condition bear such goodly evidence, we shall say something hereafter. But if it can be proved, that the Unitarian Christians *have* used the unlawful means of persecution, we shall heartily unite in reprobating their conduct, and we shall show how directly opposed our principles are, to the spirit of intolerance. Persecution we abhor and detest, in every form and under every pretence. Yes, we abominate the principle, that man is amenable to an earthly tribunal for his religious principles. Bigotry and persecution we hate, with perfect hatred; whether it proceed to overt acts of violence, or secretly undermines character, and misrepresents principles; whether it uses the arm of the civil magistrate, or displays itself in going about from house to house, gathering and circulating tales of scandal, exciting prejudices, poisoning the minds of congregations against their ministers, disturbing the harmony of families, and insidiously fostering, and exciting suspicions, evil surmises, backbitings, boastings, and malignity.

According to Mr. H. nothing good can come from Unitarianism. Unitarians are "the engineers of Satan!" God is our Judge. Before his tribunal shall we all appear, and then it will be seen, who have been the faithful servants of Christ.

(To be Continued.)

To the Rev. Dr. Wardlaw.

Rev. Sir,

For several years back—indeed, from the time I left your congregation—I have intended to write to you; but have always, from a variety of causes, been induced to defer it. My long and regular attendance at your chapel, rendered, I daresay, my abrupt off-break, matter of surprise among your constant hearers and admirers; and, on your part, it is possible you might, at the time, expect from me a statement of the reasons which made me leave your church, and become a member of the Uni-

tarian congregation. I do freely confess, that it was partly my duty to communicate such to you, and I trust you will pardon the procrastination, if, even at this late period, I should endeavour to satisfy you, in some measure, of the manner by which I was led to doubt the truth of your doctrines—to investigate the Bible for myself—and, in the end, to become a firm believer in that religion which you so strenuously opposed. In doing so, I by no means intend to enter into a comparison of the Trinitarian and Unitarian creeds, and an examination of the scriptural passages by which they are respectively supposed to be supported, for that is beyond my ability, and not, at any rate, necessary in the present case:—I intend to lay before you merely, in as brief space as possible, an account of the *first steps* I made, in my progress to what I consider to be the truth; resting satisfied, that every individual, of whatever denomination, if he could, by any possibility, be induced to advance a single step towards free and unprejudiced inquiry, would infallibly be led to that result, at which I, with feelings of the deepest gratitude to God, have arrived.

I was brought up strictly in the Orthodox faith, and had reached manhood before a single doubt regarding it crossed my mind. I cannot at all describe my thoughts and feelings during the period in which my soul was wrapped in darkness; yet it is only by the recollection of these feelings, that I am enabled to sympathise with Trinitarians, and to attribute their apathy, under scriptural proofs clear as noon-day, and arguments conclusive as mathematical demonstrations, to education and habit, which, otherwise, I might attribute to very different motives. As an instance of my ineffable *complacency* (for that is the best term, by which I can convey any idea of my feelings) with myself and my creed, and my conviction of the impiety of all others, I may mention, what I well remember, of being taken, when a youth, by a friend, to the Unitarian Chapel, one Sabbath evening, and of sitting, during all the service, in bodily fear that the house would come down about my ears! I have no recollection of the preacher or his sermon; but though he had had the tongue of an angel, to me, *then*—incrusted as I was in my own conceit, and without one charitable or liberal feeling for any of a different belief—his words would have been but as "sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal."

The first thing which staggered me, or which ruffled the satisfied placidity of my thoughts, was a remark made by a free-speaking acquaintance, upon your Discourses on the Socinian Controversy, at the very time when all the town was flocking to hear them. The remark, I confess, may be considered irreverent by some, and has really nothing very solid in it; but I mention it frankly, because from it I date the commencement of my inquiry after truth, and it furnishes one in addition to the many instances by which the Almighty is pleased, through apparently trivial means, to work out most important changes. Speaking of your Socinian Discourses, my acquaintance said,—"How is Mr. Wardlaw—a man who believes that he would commit a sin in the eyes of the EVERLASTING and INCONCEIVABLE JEHOVAH, were he to eat the blood of any animal,—how is *he* qualified to teach correct notions of the Deity?" This observation made an impression on me at the time, stronger than, even to myself, I would admit. I had always considered you as the ablest minister in Glasgow, and perhaps I was not far wrong in doing so. You were a man of considerable talents and learning—your delivery was graceful—your style sweet—your character irreproachable,—above all, you were my family minister;—and it was little wonder, that I, like too many, placed an implicit reliance upon your *ipse dixit*, and made your word—not the Bible—the rule of my faith. The shadow of a doubt respecting your creed, or your capacity to teach, had never before, for a moment, flashed across my mind; but now, I doubted both in spite of myself. I became restless—uneasy—dissatisfied,—and felt, on the conclusion of your Discourses on the Socinian question, that my orthodoxy had gained nothing in sureness or strength, by your attempt to prop and establish it. I also judged, from your anxiety and fervour, that you had engaged in no ordinary battle—that you had the mighty intellect of many an honoured name to combat with,—and I unconsciously inferred the weakness of your cause, from the *defensive manner* in which you conducted the warfare. Still I continued an attender at your church; and when your Discourses were published, I read them, but with even less satisfaction than I had heard them delivered. Arguments, which, in the heat of delivery, appeared strong and convincing, now, on re-consideration in the closet, became vague and inconclusive; and passages,

which, when read in your own honied accent, seemed soft and smooth enough, now appeared, in legible pica, acrimonious and uncharitable. It is remarkable, that, with this conviction, or rather inward feeling, for I was not fully aware of its extent, I did not immediately betake myself to an examination of the other side of the question; but such was the fact, and with shame I confess it, I continued to dose on for a considerable period, disturbed in my dangerous slumber, no doubt, but not awakened to the glorious light that was bursting around me. *By accident*, I obtained a copy of Mr. Yates's Answer to your Discourses, and never shall I forget the impressions it made upon me. I had not gone through many of its pages, till I discovered that I had a writer to deal with very different from you—one whose style far surpassed yours in chasteness and precision—and whose manner of handling his subject appeared, in the highest degree, calm, dispassionate, and clear. This was my first impression; but this was a very trifle compared to those convictions which, as I proceeded in the perusal of the volume, assailed me in every quarter, and which, on closing the book, concentrated themselves into a force that I could not resist, and that produced a total and complete change in my feelings and belief. I felt that my eyes were opened, and I wondered that the Bible had so long remained a sealed book to me. "The ways of God to man," which, under my former creed, I could never to my own satisfaction "justify," now appeared to me in all their benignant and beautiful harmony; and the goodness of that Providence, which, in despair, I had sometimes been tempted to question, now shone on my soul in all its native and blessed lustre. I proceeded in my investigation of the truth; I read the Bible anew; I read your angry Reply to Mr. Yates; and also his Sequel, which yet remains unanswered by you, and is, perhaps, unanswerable; I studied the works of the ablest writers on both sides of the question; and became confirmed in the belief, that Unitarianism is the simple and undefiled truth, as it is in Jesus. It would have been sinful any longer to hesitate:—I left your ministry, and became a member of the Unitarian Congregation.

I do not intend, as I said, to specify any of those proofs and arguments by which I was converted. To *you* it would be needless, for you are aware of their number, and

have fully experienced their force, although the shackles of your education and profession, and the natural pride of the human heart, may prevent you from ever acknowledging it. Notwithstanding all that has been written and spoken against it, Unitarianism is spreading in Scotland, not rapidly, indeed, but steadily. It has difficulties to encounter here, which it has not in England or America; not that my countrymen are less clear-headed than their neighbours, but they are rooted in their prejudices, and peculiarly attached to the system of their fathers. If, however, they be slow in adopting a new faith, they will also be slow in abandoning it, when adopted; and I am confidently persuaded, that a generation or two will do much to root out our existing prejudices; and although *we* may not live to witness it, the time is not far distant, when TRUTH will spread herself triumphantly over the land, and the worship of THE ONE GOD, THE FATHER, be heard in every corner of our hills and valleys.

I am,

REV. SIR,

Your very obedient Servant, &c.

AN OLD HEARER.

GLASGOW, Aug. 29, 1826.

One Hundred Scriptural Arguments for the Unitarian Faith:—recently published in Boston, by the American Unitarian Association.

UNITARIAN Christians believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of God and the Saviour of men. They believe in the divinity of his mission and in the divinity of his doctrines. They believe that the Gospel, which he proclaimed, came from God; that the knowledge it imparts, the morality it enjoins, the spirit it breathes, the acceptance it provides, the promises it makes, the prospects it exhibits, the rewards it proposes, the punishments it threatens, all proceed from the great Jehovah. But they do not believe, that Jesus Christ is the Supreme God. They believe that, though exalted far above all other created intelligences, he is a being distinct from, inferior to, and dependent upon, the Father Almighty. For this belief, they urge, among other reasons, the following arguments from the Scriptures.

1. Because Jesus Christ is represented by the sacred writers, to be as distinct a being from God the Father, as one man is distinct from another. "It is written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. *I am one* who bear witness of myself, and *the Father* that sent me, beareth witness of me."—John viii. 17, 18.

2. Because he not only never said that himself was God, but, on the contrary, spoke of the *Father*, who sent him, as God, and as the *only God*. "This is life eternal, that they might know *Thee, the only true God*, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."—John xvii. 3. This language our Saviour used in solemn prayer to "*his* Father and *our* Father."

3. Because he is declared, in unnumbered instances, to be the *Son of God*. "And lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is *my beloved Son*, in whom I am well pleased."—Mat. iii. 17. Can a son be *coeval* and the *same* with his father?

4. Because he is styled *the Christ*, or *the anointed of God*. "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power."—Acts x. 38. Is he who anoints the same with him who is anointed?

5. Because he is represented as a *Priest of God*. "Consider the * * * *High Priest* of our profession, Christ Jesus,"—Heb. iii. 1. The office of a priest is to *minister to God*. Christ, then, as a priest, cannot be God.

6. Because Christ is *Mediator* between the "One God," and "men." "For there is one God, and one *Mediator between God and men*, the man Christ Jesus."—1 Tim. ii. 5.

7. Because, as *the Saviour* of men, he *was sent by the Father*. "And we have seen and do testify that *the Father sent the Son* to be the Saviour of the world."—1 John iv. 14.

8. Because he is an *Apostle, appointed by God*. "Consider the Apostle, * * * Christ Jesus, who was faithful to *him that appointed* him."—Heb. iii. 1, 2.

9. Because Christ is represented as our *intercessor* with God. "It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also *maketh intercession for us*."—Rom. viii. 34.

10. Because Christ says, "My Father is greater than all."—John x. 29. Is not the Father, then, greater than the Son?

(To be Continued.)

THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

GLASGOW, *September* 9, 1826.

IN sending forth the first number of the first periodical publication in Scotland, devoted to free inquiry, and the promulgation, defence, and illustration of the principles of Christian Unitarianism, we are naturally called on to say a few words, as to our motives and intentions in commencing such a work. The Prospectus issued in July, will have partly explained these to the individuals who have honoured the Magazine with their names, as subscribers; but some additional observations, it is hoped, will be agreeable even to them, whilst it seems desirable that our readers generally, should be acquainted with our plan of procedure, and the reasons which have induced us to embrace and pursue it.

The leading object of the Christian Pioneer, is to uphold the great doctrines of the Reformation, the sufficiency of Scripture, the right of individual judgment, and of fearless free inquiry. In consequence of acting up to these doctrines, we have been led to reject the commonly received systems of theology, and to embrace what seems to us to be the pure and undefiled Religion of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. We confess, with gratitude to Heaven, that, after the way which the world calls heresy, we worship the God of our fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets; and have hope towards God, that there shall be a resurrection from the dead, both of the just and the unjust. Having witnessed the holy, purifying, and benevolent tendency of the principles we esteem to be the truth, on many a mind,—having experienced their power to comfort, and cheer, and support, in the trying hour of sickness and affliction,—having seen the energy they impart in the work of duty—their all-powerful efficacy in leading to the practice of virtue, and in producing the peaceable fruits of righteousness, which are, by Jesus Christ, to the praise and glory of God,—beholding, as we have done, the calm, the dignified, the Christian resignation they have given to the dying believer—and the peace of God which they have breathed upon the departing spirit,—we should hold

ourselves guilty of ingratitude to the Father of all mercies, and to the honoured Messenger of his grace, and of culpable indifference to the best and dearest interests of mankind, were we not to devote ourselves, heart and soul, to the dissemination and practice of doctrines so admirably adapted to promote and insure the improvement, virtue, and happiness of our race.

Convinced, as we are, from the world's history, that the commonly received systems of theology, have retarded human improvement, and been bars to the progress of intellect, and been productive of vice, and of every species of mental and bodily thraldom, we feel it to be our duty, however unpopular it may be, and to whatever obloquy it may expose us, to protest against and oppose them. Our wish is, that men would discard Creeds and Catechisms, the compositions of frail and fallible beings, and fix their attention on the words and actions of Jesus Christ and his Apostles. If, instead of bowing down before the Servant of Servants—or being deterred from an investigation of religious subjects, by the profane censures of the creed of St. Athanasius—or crouching beneath the withering doctrines of Calvinism,—all men would resolve to sit at the feet of Jesus, that they might learn of him, we do think that individual and social improvement would be greatly accelerated; and, consequently, that individual and social virtue and happiness would be more probably secured.

Let a man's faith, however, be what it may, we desire it to be the result of individual judgment, of his own free inquiry. We ask, we wish no man to adopt our principles without examination; but we do ask, that they should not be condemned without it. We seek to make no converts through fear or coercion; but we do protest against coercion and fear being called forth to prevent conversion. We have no motives of interest, save the blessed ones of Truth, to hold forth, to tempt the profession of Christian Unitarianism; but we do abominate the use of Mammon's gifts, in deterring the candid and conscientious from declaring their opinions. All we ask is, freedom of thought, and freedom to profess the results of inquiry, without molestation or injury. Give us these, and we shall be satisfied.

Nor will the pages of the Christian Pioneer be devoted solely to theology. Whatever subject, with the exception

of party politics, has a tendency to promote the melioration of the condition of man, and to advance his knowledge, dignity, privileges, and happiness, will meet in us with sincere and zealous advocacy. The important questions of Education, of Capital and Legal Punishment, of Prison Discipline, of War, and of Slavery under all its various modifications, will be occasionally brought before the notice of our readers; for these are questions, we think, richly meriting the attention of every enlightened mind, and of every benevolent heart.

Discoveries in science or improvements in art, which have a bearing on human welfare, which tend to diminish the mass of human ill, and to increase the sum of human comfort and enjoyment, we shall likewise gladly notice and record.

It will be our aim, to show the criminality of an indifference to God's truth, and man's improvement and salvation; to expose the sophistry which induces men to think with the wise, but to act with the vulgar; to lay bare the shuffling and evasion on the all-important subjects of Christian truth and righteousness, which is so common; to show, that in Religion, as well as in other matters, honesty is the best policy; that every motive which is binding on human beings, calls on every upright and virtuous individual, to profess that only which he believes to be the truth—conscientiously and consistently to maintain the opinions, which, after patient investigation, he deems to be consonant to reason, and sanctioned by Revelation—to join only in that worship which his mature judgment and reflection approves, but never to sanction that which his understanding rejects, and his heart condemns —and to induce our fellow-believers, never more to be guilty of that tampering with every thing which is sacred in faith, or dignifying to human nature, as, for the sake of fashion, worldly praise, or worldly emolument, to go with a lie in their right hand into the sanctuary of their God.

Against the bigotry which would deter from inquiry, and the indifference which would avoid it, we shall equally battle. We deem them both to be inimical to man's improvement and happiness; nor can we accurately determine which is the direst foe. We trust, however, that we shall always draw a broad line of distinction between the error we combat, and him who entertains it. We can respect, esteem, and love the one; whilst our aversion to

the other, will lead us to attempt to uproot it. It is this distinction, between the individual and the doctrines he maintains, which ought always to be recollected, if we desire that charity and good-will should prevail; and it is because it is so generally disregarded, that the world is so much harassed by the bitter and malignant denunciations of those, who, judging by the temper they manifest, prove to the reflecting mind, that if they possess the genuine *doctrines* of Christianity, they yet know nothing of its *spirit*.

Such being the views with which we commence the Christian Pioneer, and the motives which have led us to undertake the labour, we earnestly solicit the aid and co-operation of every friend to freedom of thought, and the improvement of man. Communications will be thankfully received, and, if deemed likely to be productive of good, will be inserted. Of this, of course, the Editor must be the sole judge; nor will any communications be given, which are inconsistent with the avowed intention of the work, as described in the preceding remarks. The limited number of the pages of the Christian Pioneer, will not admit of lengthened controversial papers; but candid observations and explanations, by any religious denomination, will meet with attention.

May the Work, small though it be, be sanctioned by that Great Being, without whose blessing nothing can prosper; and may it be rendered by Him, in however humble a measure, instrumental in the regeneration and reformation of the World.

THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER will be published on the *second Saturday* of every Month.

ADVERTISEMENTS will be inserted on the Cover, on moderate terms.

COMMUNICATIONS for THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER, are requested to be addressed (Post paid) to the Editor, care of Messrs. HEDDERWICK & SON, Printers, Glasgow.

We have much pleasure in stating, that, in consequence of the rapid sale of the first Number of the Magazine, we have unexpectedly been called on for a Second Edition. We hail it as a proof of the progress of Free Inquiry in Scotland, and, we trust, may also regard it as a pledge of the permanent prosperity of our Work.

THE

CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

No. 2. October, 1826. Vol. I.

The Religious State of Geneva.

(Continued from page 27.)

In our last Number, we examined Mr. Haldane's View of the Religious State of the Continent. We promised, in our present Number, to consider particularly, the state of Religion at Geneva. Mr. Haldane says, in his Second Review, "that he has given an account of the state of the Church of Geneva, in his unanswered letter to M. Chenevière, pastor and professor of divinity at that place, and a determined enemy of the Gospel." This letter, we have not seen, nor have we tried to procure it, because we have ample information on this subject, and are unwilling again to undertake the task of refuting the misstatements, exposing the prejudice, and censuring the illiberality of an arrogant writer, who anathematizes all those who cannot subscribe his narrow creed.

The doctrines of the Reformation were fearlessly preached at Geneva, by Farel; and, in the year 1535, they were publicly received. Calvin was induced, by the urgent entreaties of this intrepid Reformer, to accept the invitation of the magistrates, to the professor's chair of divinity, and to a church-living in Geneva. Calvin's profound learning, austere demeanor, and domineering manners, acquired him considerable authority, and gradually obtained a supreme ascendancy; the fatal influence of which was exhibited in the triumph of his gloomy and vindictive principles over the liberty and life of the Unitarian Christian Servetus. This pious, virtuous, and learned martyr had corresponded for many years with Calvin. But the confidence which he, who had all the innocence of the dove, without the wisdom of the serpent, placed in Calvin, was basely betrayed. The manuscript of a work against the doctrine of the Trinity, which he published anonymously, but entrusted to the inspection of the stern Reformer, was delivered into the hands of the Catholics, by whom its author was seized, and condemned to the flames.

Servetus escaped from the fires of the inquisition, but fell a sacrifice to the equally fierce, but more culpable bigotry of the Reformers. Loudly denouncing the vindictive spirit of the Church of Rome, they manifested the same diabolical temper. Servetus, passing through Geneva on his road to Italy, was betrayed and arrested at the instigation of Calvin, who urged the magistrates to try him for heresy, who produced his confidential letters and manuscripts in confirmation of the charge, and was the principal cause of the condemnation, and the cruel death of this righteous confessor. This infamous proceeding has left a lasting stigma on the conduct and principles of Calvin. His whole demeanor towards the guileless Servetus, is characterised by great duplicity and cruelty. "The craftiness of address and management in causing Servetus to be apprehended and brought to a trial, his brutal and furious treatment of him at the time of his trial, and his dissimulation and malevolence towards him after his condemnation," exhibit the genuine fruits of his principles, by which we may judge of their unscriptural nature. But the murder of Servetus did not satiate the bigotry of this domineering priest. He stimulated the magistrates of Geneva, to imprison J. Bolsec, a protestant physician, for the heinous heresy that infants are *not* eternally damned. But Calvin's importunities for another *auto da fe*, were, happily, unsuccessful. The spirit of his creed, however, tainted the minds of the Genevese with its intolerance. In the course of sixty years, one hundred and fifty persons were destroyed, on the charge of witchcraft. In 1632, Nicholas Antoine, a convert from the Catholic faith, a learned and an excellent man, preached against the doctrine of the Trinity. His faculties became deranged; we do not know whether in consequence of the persecution which he endured; but it is certain, that this most dreadful calamity did not abate the fury of Calvinistic zeal. He was, though deranged, strangled, and burned under the walls of Geneva.

Let this suffice as a specimen of the natural operation of Calvinism in Geneva. A long catalogue might be produced, of trials, imprisonments, spoliations, and deaths for conscience' sake, inflicted by the influence of those tenets which a party in this country are striving to inculcate again on the Genevese. Let them put forth all their strength—let them have recourse to misrepresentation and

calumny—let them sow divisions in families and in churches —let them anathematize, and brand as infidels, all who are not of their sect,—we are persuaded that such measures and counsels will come to nought, and that such doctrines as they would force upon the people, cannot procure adherents amongst those whose ancestors experienced their bitter fruits. *The Christians* have work enough before them, if they are to re-convert those who have relinquished the creed of Calvin. When they have gone over the cities of the continent of Europe, let them turn their eyes to North America. The once *orthodox* town of Boston alone contains more than twelve Unitarian congregations.

But to return. At length the Clergy and people began to distrust the truth of those opinions which produced so many direful consequences, and, in the course of time, liberal and rational principles were introduced. The Scriptures were studied without regard to human creeds and formularies of faith, and the consequence was manifested in the gradual emancipation of the human mind from the thraldom of bigotry and prejudice. Calvinism, of course, disappeared; and the cheering, the purifying doctrines of the Unity, the impartiality, the paternity and benevolence of the Supreme Being, diffused peace, and candour, and good will throughout this small republic. Rejoicing in their happy deliverance from the galling chains of the austere and vindictive system of Calvin, the Confession of Faith was suppressed, and subscription to it was set aside. This important event happened more than a hundred years since. The Genevese clergy, left to the free examination of the sacred Scriptures, became fully persuaded of the strict Unity, and of the free grace of God. The strong hold of Calvinism fell down before the voice of reason and revelation, as the walls of Jericho at the sound of the trumpet. The metropolis of orthodoxy has become noted for heresy. In the estimation of the disciples of Calvin, the faithful city has become a harlot. Ichabod, Ichabod, is the exclamation of a few, but Maranatha, Maranatha, is the imprecation of the majority. The clergy and inhabitants of Geneva are assailed by the grossest epithets of abuse, and libelled by the foulest misrepresentation. The very head and front of their offending, is, that they have had the presumption to judge for themselves—to hearken unto God more than unto men—and have, from a careful examination of the Bible, been led to

reject, as irrational and unscriptural, the creed and doctrines of Calvin. They have dared to prove all things, and to hold fast that which seems to them sound doctrine, a doctrine according to godliness. They pursued the noiseless tenor of their way—the pastors faithfully discharging the duties of their ministry, and the people, by their general good conduct, manifesting the soundness of their principles—without attracting the attention of foreigners, until the year 1810. About this time, a small society of Moravians appeared in the city, and excited a little attention to doctrines, which the Genevese regarded as corruptions of Christianity. In 1813, the celebrated missionary and enthusiast, Madame de Krudener, appeared in Geneva, and caused no small stir, by the measures which she adopted to make converts to her system. Her labours were attended with partial success. A few theological students approved her doctrines and her plans, and the minds of many were considerably agitated. The pastors of Geneva, too anxious, we think, respecting the peace of the Church, following the example of the clergy of Basle, drew up regulations, requiring all theological students to promise not to countenance any religious meeting which was not approved by the Consistory; and, in the formulary of ordination, the young men were to promise to abstain from all sectarianism, and to avoid whatever would be the occasion of schism, or interrupt the unity of the Church.

An established church has a right to form regulations for the government of its members. The Genevese pastors seem to have been actuated with a pure desire to maintain the harmony of their establishment, but were perhaps too fearful of religious controversy, imagining that it would excite animosity, and disturb the unity and concord of their peaceful city. We wish that they had let these enthusiasts pursue their own courses, without descending to make any regulations to guard their Church from discord. The natural good sense of the inhabitants, who are well instructed in the principles of religion, is a sufficient protection. And we cannot imagine, that any theological students, freed from the warping influence of creeds and confessions of faith, and well grounded in the language of Scripture, would have their religious principles endangered by Calvinistic sentiments. Though we think these regulations ill judged, we cannot imagine, on what ground any

members of the Church of England or Scotland, or of any Burgher or Antiburgher society, can condemn them, as they guard their own faith by rules, and enforce it by creeds and confessions.

Geneva, once the metropolis of orthodoxy, was, after the conclusion of the war, eagerly resorted to by foreigners, desirous of ascertaining the real state of religious opinion in this celebrated city. The reports of its defection from Calvinism were discovered to be well founded. An alarm was sounded, as if Christianity was in danger. Emissaries from Britain endeavoured, by various measures, some of them not very creditable to them, to revive the spirit of Calvinism. Means were adopted to lessen the confidence of the people in their pastors; the clergy were branded as heretics, who were destroying the souls committed to their spiritual care. Controversy found its way into the pulpit; good works were denounced; other means of salvation were preached, than those which had been recommended for so many years. Justice, mercy, and faithfulness, love to God, and benevolence to man, were declared inefficacious. The pastors, hearing their characters grossly attacked, and their doctrines condemned; fearing lest the peace of their Church would be effectually destroyed, by the persevering machinations of rich and bountiful foreigners, determined to prohibit the introduction of controversy into the pulpits of Geneva. They did not, however, infringe upon the expression of the opinions of any of their brethren, in conversation, nor did they lay them under any restraint as to the publication of them from the press. But they thought it advisable, under the peculiar circumstances in which they were placed, to insist expressly, that no minister of the Church of Geneva, should discuss, in the pulpit, the manner in which the divine nature is united to the person of Jesus Christ, or the doctrine of original sin; the operation of grace, or effectual calling and predestination. The clergy entered also into an engagement, not to oppose, in their public discourses, the sentiments of any ministers or pastors on these subjects.

These regulations, which were formally drawn out and subscribed, do, in fact, nothing more than embody the tacit understanding, which had existed for sixty years, not to introduce controversial subjects into the pulpit. We again express our opinion, that these regulations are inju-

dicious. But we cannot imagine, why they should be so loudly condemned; why the members of a very strait sect, who bind one another down with the strictest rules, should abuse the Genevese pastors for the measures which they have taken, to preserve the unity of the Church in the bond of peace. These regulations are denounced in the strongest terms; the authors are branded as persecutors, and their characters are subjected to the foulest calumny. Foreigners, busy bodies, neglecting their own concerns, have the audacity and illiberality to congregate in Geneva, to abuse the civil and religious authorities. They have assembled a few individuals, and poisoned their minds against their ministers. They have sowed divisions, and are acting according to the literal interpretation of the figurative words of Christ (to which, indeed, they appeal in justification of their conduct), I am come to set a son at variance against his father. They declare, that they do not come to bring peace in Geneva; they do not come to bring peace, but a sword.

As the conduct of the Genevese clergy is so grossly misrepresented in this country, we think it proper to give the following testimonials of the ill-founded accusations of their slanderers.

"*To the Reverend Pastors of the Church of Geneva.*

"GENTLEMEN AND MUCH HONOURED PASTORS,

"THE Members of your Church would not have considered the daring attacks on you, in recent publications, deserving of their notice, if they had regarded merely the impotence of the hands by which you are assailed, or the power of truth by which you are defended; but their indignation is aroused, by this unexpected renewal of the efforts of hypocrisy,—by those cries of fanaticism, which strike terror into the heart of true piety,—by the firebrands of discord, hurled in the bosom of religious peace. Devoted to the duties of your office, and surrounded with our love and veneration, be pleased, respected Pastors, to regard with calmness, but firmly to repel those audacious attempts. Continue by your pastoral cares and your affecting sermons, to lead us, as you have ever done, in the path of religion and virtue, and to show us the purity of your doctrine by the holiness of your lives; thus you will unceasingly instruct and improve those who are under your care, and render them worthy of Pastors like yourselves.—GENEVA, Sept. 17, 1818."

We present also the following extract from another address of the Genevese to their pastors. "Whilst you, animated by the spirit of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, are providing, with so much zeal and affection, for the spiritual wants of your flock, shall the objects of your care remain silent and unmoved, when the spirit of evil is called up, to cast its venom on your ministry, and to rob you of the confidence you merit?"

These testimonials clearly prove the evil machinations of the enemies of the clergy of Geneva, and abundantly refute the calumnies by which they are assailed. The internal dissensions have originated with, and have been sedulously fomented by, foreigners. The means which they have adopted, have gained a few adherents. A powerful auxiliary has been found in M. Malan, formerly of the Established Church of Geneva, but now a violent enemy. He incessantly rails at the doctrines and character of the Genevese clergy. He denominates them infidels and persecutors, speaks contemptuously of their religious assemblies, and exhorts the people to abstain from them. This M. Malan has lately been in Scotland, anathematizing the Genevese, and exciting the compassion of his credulous auditors, by a doleful tale of personal sufferings for Christ's sake. Did we believe in the doctrine of original sin, we should cease to wonder at his popularity in Scotland. His doctrine must be very acceptable to publicans and sinners, for he declares, that, in point of justification before God, the most abandoned sinner, and the most virtuous character, are on a perfect level; that the evidence of the true faith, is, a firm, unmoveable conviction of a person's own salvation; and that it is utterly impossible to fall from a state of grace. In 1817, M. Malan first attracted the attention of his pupils and congregation, by introducing into the pulpit and the lecture-room, doctrines which were discarded: opposition quickened his zeal; he continued to act in violation of the regulations which had been unanimously adopted; and at last was deprived of his situation in the College, and excluded from the Established Church. He was not, however, harshly treated. His persecutors, as he names the clergy, manifested towards him, an uncommon degree of affectionate consideration. "Out of much affliction and anguish of heart, the Pastors wrote to him with many tears." But gentleness and mild expostulation were thrown away. Supported

by Calvinists from this country, he set his brethren at defiance, refused to submit to their regulations; and yet, inconsistently claimed the use of the pulpit of the Established Church. We cannot suppose, that M. Malan was so unreasonable as to believe, that he would be permitted to preach within the walls of a Church, the doctrines and ministers of which he treated with contempt, and assailed with the greatest abuse. He was, however, stimulated to harass and provoke the Genevese pastors. He is supported—to be a thorn in the side of the Unitarians of Geneva. As he has assiduously laboured to represent the conduct of the Pastors of Geneva towards himself, as extremely unprincipled and cruel, we think it an act of justice to them, to state a few of the particulars. We know that he was treated in the most affectionate manner; and that it was not, till after repeated entreaties and mild expostulations, that he was excluded from the Establishment.

The following letter and circumstances, will show that he has not been cruelly used.

"SIR, AND VERY DEAR BROTHER,

"THE body of the Clergy cannot grant you permission to fill the pulpit in your canton, until you promise, not with regard to any single service, but for your general guidance, to conform to the regulation which has been framed for all its own members, and for all the ministers, in the spirit of prudence and charity, and purely for the maintenance of peace in our Church; any repetition, therefore, of your demand, would be useless. Such is the definitive resolution I am charged to communicate; renewing, at the same time, the assurance of the paternal sentiments of the Pastors, and of their earnest wish to give proofs of the affection they cherish for you."

Nine months consideration, induced M. Malan to send in his submission, in the following words:—"I have sinned against you, my brethren, by a deplorable spirit of exclusion, which was other than the wisdom which cometh from above. The Lord has had mercy on me; he has made use of the solicitude, the counsels, the example, the pious writings of many of you, to keep me from falling, when I stood on the brink of an abyss. It is my desire, brethren, under these happy circumstances, to grant all that you require of me. Be pleased, then, to listen with kindness to the resolution I take with my whole heart,

for the sake of peace, to subscribe to the regulation of the 3d of May, 1817; and grant me your paternal affection."

M. Malan's submission was of no long continuance. He became more violently opposed to the regulations than ever. From the Cathedral pulpit, he called the Genevese Pastors, heretics and infidels. No wonder that he was deprived of his situation in the Church. This event took place in 1823. M. Malan, however, continues to libel the doctrines and character of the Pastors of Geneva, from a pulpit of his own. He is supported by rich and zealous friends. Though we do not question his sincerity, we think it proper to state, that the *persecution* of which he complains, has increased his fame and his income very considerably. We did intend to say a few words respecting the state of morals in Geneva, as the Calvinists have industriously circulated reports very prejudicial to the character of the inhabitants; but having already extended this article so much beyond our intention, we shall content ourselves with the following testimonials. An English gentleman of the Episcopal Church, says, "I do not agree with the Genevese in matters of faith, but, during the four years I have resided in their territory, with my family, I have acquired a full conviction, that there is less vice and immorality in Geneva, than in most other cities; and I know no place where young people would be so safe from temptation, or the influence of bad example." Another member of the English Church, after a long residence in Geneva, said, "Geneva is unquestionably the most moral city in Europe."

In our next Number, we intend to consider the Apocryphal question.

The Landing of the Pilgrims.

BY MRS. HEMANS.

THE breaking waves dash'd high
On a stern and rock-bound coast,
And the woods against a stormy sky,
Their giant branches toss'd:

And the heavy night hung dark
The hills and waters o'er,
When a band of exiles moor'd their bark
On the wild New-England shore.

Not as the conqueror comes,
They, the true-hearted, came;
Not with the roll of the stirring drums,
And the trumpet that sings of fame:

Not as the flying come,
In silence and in fear;
They shook the depths of the desert's gloom,
With their hymns of holy cheer!

Amidst the storm, they sang;
And the stars heard and the sea!
And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang
To the anthem of the free!

The ocean eagle soar'd
From his nest by the white waves' foam,
And the rocking pines of the forest roar'd:—
This was their welcome home!

There were men with hoary hair,
Amidst the pilgrim band;
Why had they come to wither there,
Away from their childhood's land?

There was woman's fearless eye,
Lit by her deep love's truth;
There was manhood's brow serenely high,
And the fiery heat of youth.

What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?
They sought for faith's pure shrine!

Yes! call it Holy Ground,
The soil where first they trod!
They have left unstain'd what there they found,—
Freedom to worship God!

To William M'Gavin, Esq. author of "The Protestant."

Sir,

In addressing you, I do so with a feeling of unfeigned respect. Although differing from you on points of more essential moment than the Catholics, I do most cheerfully acknowledge my admiration of the talents you displayed in "The Protestant,"—an admiration heightened by the circumstance, that they were brought out *acci-*

dentally, and that, but for a trifling letter in a newspaper, you might have slumbered on, with the character merely of a well-behaved and upright Glasgow merchant. This acknowledgment will not appear the less sincere, when I state to you my humble but deep conviction, that these talents were misapplied; and that your work, with all its undoubted ability, while it held out little probability of reforming or converting the Catholics, was unquestionably calculated to nourish that pride in spiritual matters, which so peculiarly distinguishes the people of this country, and to add fresh fuel to those heart-burnings which have so long wofully subsisted between the two Churches. As a Unitarian, I cannot be suspected of the slightest partiality to Popery. Popery I disavow, in all its bearings, civil and religious; and, considering it as a system which held Europe for many a century, and still partially holds it, in deplorable intellectual bondage, no one could possibly more rejoice than I, in its total and irremediable extinction. But I am fully persuaded, that, in this country, there exists (to say the least) enough of prejudice and aversion to it—a prejudice, which is, in many instances, carried to a most unchristian and illiberal height; and the spirit of which, cannot be better illustrated than by the fact, that, up to this day, in this vaunted land of liberty, a Catholic is excluded from his civil rights as a man, and a member of the British Empire. The fear which you expressed in your work, of Popery gaining ground, or of the people becoming less alive to its baneful doctrines and practices, I consider to be absurd and unfounded. Education and information are spreading rapidly, and Popery *must necessarily* hide its face before the light of knowledge. If, therefore, you composed your work under the above feeling, you were, I make bold to say, combating with a phantom of your own creating; or, if you composed it, with the view of confirming your readers in their aversion to Popery, you were (to use a familiar phrase) carrying coals to Newcastle; for, in Scotland, and in this quarter of Scotland particularly, where your work was chiefly read, the people were already more than sufficiently grounded in their abhorrence of Popery; and so far from there being any necessity of exciting or increasing that abhorrence, there was every need for subduing the sinful extent to which it was often carried, and for infusing a spirit among them more becoming the gospel, and more

befitting themselves as erring and dependent creatures—a spirit of humble unprejudiced inquiry after truth, and of good-will and charity towards their fellow-men of every denomination. You, Sir, who, I doubt not, have mingled considerably in the religious society of your countrymen, must have observed—what forms, in fact, their prominent characteristics—the stubborn pertinacity with which they cling to their doctrines, and the unqualified contempt which they entertain for all who choose to differ from them. There is a wide difference, you are well aware, between an attachment to peculiar dogmas in religion, and an attachment to religion itself; and that the former is more prevalent than the latter, may be inferred from the rancorous spirit which is very generally betrayed towards those whose views in doctrinal points do not accord with the popular one. How much your work tended to increase that spirit, I shall not pretend to inquire, especially as it is possible that you may, by this time—now that the fervor of controversy is over—have repented of the asperity in which you so often indulged, and of the unmeasured severity with which you invariably treated your opponents. The great body of the public went along with you; you could scarcely go too far in such company: the party to which you belonged, was the popular and powerful one for the time being; and, while others of a different belief—if they expected a hearing at all—were obliged to use the utmost caution and discretion, you possessed the privilege of speaking out, in unrestricted freedom, sure of being heard and of being applauded. Such a privilege no one can accuse you of having neglected to turn to account.

> "Oh it is excellent
> To have a giant's strength, but it is tyrannous
> To use it like a giant."

Was it love of truth or information, think you, that drew so many readers to your pages? If *that* had been the motive, they would, of course, like judicious inquirers, have read *both* sides of the question; but the fact is notorious, that not one of them in a thousand, ever, for a moment, looked at "The Catholic Vindicator," although it was a work written professedly in answer to "The Protestant." In an advertisement of "The Catholic Vindicator," in a Glasgow newspaper, it was properly enough requested, that the public should "suspend their

judgment" of "The Protestant," until they read the reply by Mr. Andrews; upon which you made the following strange commentary:—"Suspend their judgment!—that is, in plain English, *Don't think for yourselves till you hear Mr. Andrews, and then think as he bids you.* This is Popery with a witness!" (Appendix to Letter to James M'Hardy, Esq.)—I know not what could induce you to put so absurd a construction upon so simple and reasonable a request, unless you really felt timorous about a reply, and privately considered Mr. Andrews a less contemptible antagonist than you held him out to be.

Nothing, however, in the whole course of your controversy, more surprised and perplexed me, than to observe how tremblingly alive you were to the absurdities of Popish doctrines, and how dead, at the same time, to the absurdities of your own. Transubstantiation, for instance, although a doctrine held by the Greek and other churches, as well as the Roman Catholic, appeared to you to be in the last degree preposterous and *unreasonable;* and so highly did you chafe yourself about it, that you went the length of saying,—"If a man were to tell me that he really believed this doctrine, I should hesitate before I would believe any thing he should say; in short, I would not take the bare word of such a man, or even his oath, in order to verify any fact whatever!" PROT. vol. II. p. 47. This, by the way, is a specimen of the intolerant language in which you so often indulged, and tends to show for what class of readers your work was written. But let us see how transubstantiation is supported by Scripture: Mat. xxvi. 26, 27. "This is my body," &c.—John, vi. 33. "The bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world."—35. 48. "I am the bread of life."—51. "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; *and the bread which I give is my flesh,*" &c.—53. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you."—55. "My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed."—1 Cor. xi. 29. "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, *not discerning the Lord's body.*" These passages, if taken literally, certainly countenance the doctrine of transubstantiation; and it is only by an exertion of our reasoning faculties, that we are enabled to reject the irrational sig-

nification which they literally imply. You fully succeeded, by reason and argument, in proving its absurdity; yet *that reason*, which you were so ready to employ against Popery, you would not admit to bear against your own creed. "It is not true," you say, "that transubstantiation rests upon the same evidence as the real mysteries of our religion, such as the doctrine of the Trinity, the incarnation, &c. These are plainly revealed in the Word of God, which transubstantiation is not; and there can be nothing more reasonable, than to believe what God has said, though we cannot understand how it should be. In point of fact, however," you continue, "God has said nothing that is contrary to our reason, or to the evidence of our senses. The Bible contains all that he has to say to human creatures, till the day of judgment; and *I defy the world* to prove that it contains any thing contrary to sense or reason. It does, indeed, make known things which human reason cannot reach, and things which cannot be subjected to the scrutiny of human senses; but on this very account it is impossible to show that such things are *contrary* to reason and sense. We must have the perfect understanding of a thing before we can pronounce it contrary to sense and reason; but we have not such understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity; we cannot say it is unreasonable; and we have nothing to do but to believe what God has revealed on the subject." PROT. vol. II. p. 61. Now, in the first place, I deny that the doctrine of the Trinity is "plainly revealed in the Word of God," and, to use your own energetic phraseology, *I defy you to the proof.* When you wrote this sentence, you must have known, that you could not produce a single passage in the whole Bible, wherein the doctrine of the Trinity was "plainly revealed;" you must have known, that you could not even produce passages to support it, of equal weight with those I have just quoted, in support of the real presence—that, in short, the infinitely important doctrine of the Trinity, rested entirely upon a few phrases unwarrantably strained to serve the purpose—and that it was contradicted by innumerable passages of the most direct and incontrovertible nature. The Papists acknowledge the traditions of the fathers to be a rule of faith, and therefore (whether these traditions be correct or not) may be said to have some foundation for their dogmas; but you, who assert that you reject all authority in religion except

the Bible, retain dogmas which the Bible does not countenance, and which, but for your education, a perusal of the Bible would never perhaps have suggested. In the second place, I deny that the doctrine of the Trinity cannot be proved to be unreasonable, or that it is not equally subject to investigation as transubstantiation. You say it is "*plainly* revealed in the Word of God," and yet you afterwards add (somewhat inconsistently), "we can have no perfect understanding of it." If it be above the reach of our reason, we cannot, of course, prove it to be either contrary to or in accordance with reason; but must, as Mr. Yates has admirably shown, confine ourselves to the exact terms by which the doctrine is expressed. How, then, is it expressed in the Bible? I know not. I cannot find it. But in the Trinitarian Catechism, it is said, that "there are three persons in the Godhead, the same in substance, equal in power and glory, and *these three are one.*" This is your creed—not the words of the Bible,—and therefore is as subject to scrutiny as transubstantiation. Even admitting these words to be above the reach of human reason, still, *so far as reason can go*, they are unreasonable. The doctrine of the real presence is inconsistent with our senses;—the doctrine of the Trinity is a contradiction in terms—an arithmetical absurdity. I could as easily believe that my five fingers were composed of wheaten bread as that they were only *one* finger; indeed, if there be any difference in such absurdities, the latter is the greater; for the unimpeachable testimony of anatomists and chemists might possibly persuade me that I was mistaken with regard to the *composition* of my fingers, but all the world could not persuade me that I was mistaken with regard to their *number;* and even supposing that it did succeed in convincing me, that I had only one finger on my hand, another equally insurmountable difficulty would remain, to convince me that *one* finger was *five.* It is most unpleasant thus to descend to familiar illustration of subjects so serious and important; but it is absolutely necessary at times, if we would know the import of the terms we are using. The truth is, *Trinitarianism is Tritheism*, in spite of every effort made to prevent such a conclusion; and to say that three distinct Gods are one God, is a wretched subterfuge to escape the many Scriptural passages which declare the undivided Oneness of the Almighty.

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

Glasgow, 23d Sept. 1826. A Unitarian Protestant.

REVIEW.

Milton's Treatise on Christian Doctrine.

(Continued from page 15.)

In delineating Milton's character as a *poet*, we are saved the necessity of looking far for its distinguishing attributes. His name is almost identified with sublimity. He is, in truth, the sublimest of men. He rises, not by effort or discipline, but by a native tendency and a godlike instinct, to the contemplation of objects of grandeur and awfulness. He always moves with a conscious energy. There is no subject so vast or terrific, as to repel or intimidate him. The overpowering grandeur of a theme kindles and attracts him. He enters on the description of the infernal regions with a fearless tread, as if he felt within himself a power to erect the prison-house of fallen spirits, to encircle them with flames and horrors worthy of their crimes, to call forth from them shouts which should "tear hell's concave," and to embody in their Chief an Archangel's energies and a Demon's pride and hate. Even the stupendous conception of Satan seems never to oppress his faculties. This character of power runs through all Milton's works. His descriptions of nature show a free and bold hand. He has no need of the minute, graphic skill of Cowper or Crabbe. With a few strong or delicate touches, he impresses, as it were, his own mind on the scene which he would describe, and kindles the imagination of the gifted reader, to clothe them with the same radiant hues under which they appeared to his own.

We hasten to his great work, Paradise Lost, perhaps the noblest monument of human genius. The two first books, by universal consent, stand pre-eminent in sublimity. Hell and Hell's King have a terrible harmony, and dilate into new grandeur and awfulness, the longer we contemplate them. From one element, "solid and liquid fire," the poet has framed a world of horror and suffering, such as imagination had never traversed. But fiercer flames, than those which encompass Satan, burn in his own soul. Revenge, exasperated pride, consuming wrath, ambition though fallen, yet unconquered by the thunders of the Omnipotent, and grasping still at the empire of the universe,—these form a picture more sublime and terrible than Hell. Hell yields to the spirit which it imprisons. The intensity of its fires reveals the intenser passions and

more vehement will of Satan; and the ruined Archangel gathers into himself the sublimity of the scene which surrounds him. This forms the tremendous interest of these wonderful books. We see mind triumphant over the most terrible powers of nature. We see unutterable agony subdued by energy of soul. We have not indeed in Satan those bursts of passion, which rive the soul as well as shatter the outward frame of Lear. But we have a depth of passion which only an Archangel could manifest. The all-enduring, all-defying pride of Satan, assuming so majestically Hell's burning throne, and coveting the diadem, which scorches his thunder-blasted brow, is a creation requiring in its author almost the spiritual energy with which he invests the fallen seraph. Some have doubted whether the moral effect of such delineations of the storms and terrible workings of the soul is good; whether the interest felt in a spirit so transcendantly evil as Satan, favours our sympathies with virtue. But our interest fastens, in this and like cases, on what is not evil. We gaze on Satan, with an awe not unmixed with mysterious pleasure, as on a miraculous manifestation of the *power* of *mind*. What chains us, as with a resistless spell, in such a character, is spiritual might made visible by the racking pains which it overpowers. There is something kindling and ennobling in the consciousness, however awakened, of the energy which resides in mind; and many a virtuous man has borrowed new strength from the force, constancy, and dauntless courage of evil agents.

Milton's description of Satan attests, in various ways, the power of his genius. Critics have often observed, that the great difficulty of his work, was to reconcile the spiritual properties of his supernatural beings with the human modes of existence, which he is obliged to ascribe to them; and the difficulty is too great for any genius wholly to overcome, and we must acknowledge that our enthusiasm is in some parts of the poem checked by a feeling of incongruity between the spiritual agent, and his sphere and mode of agency. But we are visited with no such chilling doubts and misgivings in the description of Satan in Hell. Imagination has here achieved its highest triumph, in imparting a character of reality and truth to its most daring creations. That world of horrors, though material, is yet so remote from our ordinary nature, that a spiritual being, exiled from Heaven, finds there an

appropriate home. There is, too, an indefiniteness in the description of Satan's person, which incites without shocking the imagination, and aids us to combine in our conception of him, the massiness of a real form with the vagueness of spiritual existence. To the production of this effect, much depends on the first impression given by the poet; for this is apt to follow us through the whole work; and here we think Milton eminently successful. The first glimpse of Satan's form is given us in the following lines, which, whilst too indefinite to provoke the scrutiny of the reason, fill the imagination of the reader with a form which can hardly be effaced.

Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate
With head up-lift above the wave, and eyes
That sparkling blaz'd, his other parts besides
Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
Lay floating many a rood, * * *
Par. Lost, b. i. lines 192–196.

Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
His mighty stature; on each hand the flames,
Driven backward, slope their pointing spires, and roll'd
In billows, leave i' th' midst a horrid vale. 221–224.

We have more which we should gladly say of the delineation of Satan; especially of the glimpses which are now and then given of his deep anguish and despair, and of the touches of better feelings which are skilfully thrown into the dark picture, both suited and designed to mingle with our admiration, dread and abhorrence, a measure of that sympathy and interest with which every living, thinking being ought to be regarded, and without which all other feelings tend to sin and pain. But there is another topic which we cannot leave untouched. From Hell we flee to Paradise, a region as lovely as Hell is terrible, and which, to those who do not know the universality of true genius, will appear doubly wonderful, when considered as the creation of the same mind, which had painted the infernal world.

Paradise and its inhabitants are in sweet accordance, and together form a scene of tranquil bliss, which calms and soothes, whilst it delights the imagination. Adam and Eve, just moulded by the hand, and quickened by the breath of God, reflect in their countenances and forms, as well as minds, the intelligence, benignity, and happi-

ness of their Author. Their new existence has the freshness and peacefulness of the dewy morning. Their souls, unsated and untainted, find an innocent joy in the youthful creation, which spreads and smiles around them. Their mutual love is deep, for it is the love of young, unworn, unexhausted hearts, which meet in each other the only human objects on whom to pour forth their fulness of affection; and still it is serene, for it is the love of happy beings who know not suffering even by name, whose innocence excludes not only the tumults but the thought of jealousy and shame, who, "imparadised in one another's arms," scarce dream of futurity, so blessed is their present being. We will not say that we envy our first parents; for we feel that there may be higher happiness than theirs, a happiness won through struggle with inward and outward foes, the happiness of power and moral victory, the happiness of disinterested sacrifices and wide-spread love, the happiness of boundless hope, and of "thoughts which wander through eternity." Still there are times, when the spirit, oppressed with pain, worn with toil, tired of tumult, sick at the sight of guilt, wounded in its love, baffled in its hope, and trembling in its faith, almost longs for the "wings of a dove, that it might fly away" and take refuge amidst the "shady bowers," the "vernal airs," the "roses without thorns," the quiet, the beauty, the loveliness of Eden. It is the contrast of this deep peace of Paradise with the storms of life, which gives to the fourth and fifth books of this poem a charm so irresistible, that not a few would sooner relinquish the two first books, with all their sublimity, than part with these. It has sometimes been said, that the English language has no good pastoral poetry. We would ask, in what age or country has the pastoral reed breathed such sweet strains as are borne to us on "the odoriferous wings of gentle gales" from Milton's Paradise?

We should not fulfil our duty, were we not to say one word on what has been justly celebrated, the harmony of Milton's versification. His numbers have the prime charm of expressiveness. They vary with, and answer to, the depth, or tenderness, or sublimity of his conceptions, and hold intimate alliance with the soul. Like Michael Angelo, in whose hands the marble was said to be flexible, he bends our language, which foreigners reproach with hardness, into whatever forms the subject demands. All

the treasures of sweet and solemn sound are at his command. Words, harsh and discordant in the writings of less gifted men, flow through his poetry in a full stream of harmony. This power over language is not to be ascribed to Milton's musical ear. It belongs to the soul. It is a gift or exercise of genius, which has power to impress itself on whatever it touches, and finds or frames in sounds, motions, and material forms, correspondences and harmonies with its own fervid thoughts and feelings.

We close our remarks on Milton's poetry with observing, that it is characterized by seriousness. Great and various as are its merits, it does not discover all the variety of genius, which we find in Shakespeare, whose imagination revelled equally in regions of mirth, beauty, and terror, now evoking spectres, now sporting with fairies, and now "ascending the highest heaven of invention." Milton was cast on times too solemn and eventful, was called to take part in transactions too perilous, and had too perpetual need of the presence of high thoughts and motives, to indulge himself in light and gay creations, even had his genius been more flexible and sportive. But Milton's poetry, though habitually serious, is always healthful, and bright and vigorous. It has no gloom. He took no pleasure in drawing dark pictures of life; for he knew by experience, that there is a power in the soul to transmute calamity into an occasion and nutriment of moral power and triumphant virtue. We find nowhere in his writings that whining sensibility and exaggeration of morbid feeling, which makes so much of modern poetry effeminating. If he is not gay, he is not spirit-broken. His L'Allegro proves, that he understood thoroughly the bright and joyous aspects of nature; and in his Penseroso, where he was tempted to accumulate images of gloom, we learn that the saddest views which he took of creation, are such as inspire only pensive musing or lofty contemplation.

From Milton's poetry, we turn to his *prose*. We rejoice that the dust is beginning to be wiped from his prose writings, and that the public are now learning, what the initiated have long known, that these contain passages hardly inferior to his best poetry, and that they are throughout marked with the same vigorous mind, which gave us Paradise Lost. The attention to these works has been discouraged by some objections, on which we shall bestow a few remarks.

And first, it is objected to his prose writings, that the style is difficult and obscure, abounding in involutions, transpositions, and latinisms; that his protracted sentences exhaust and weary the mind, and too often yield it no better recompense, than confused and indistinct perceptions. We mean not to deny that these charges have some grounds; but they seem to us much exaggerated; and when we consider that the difficulties of Milton's style have almost sealed up his prose writings, we cannot but lament the fastidiousness and effeminacy of modern readers. We know that simplicity and perspicuity are important qualities of style; but there are vastly nobler and more important ones; such as energy and richness, and in these Milton is not surpassed. The best style is not that which puts the reader most easily and in the shortest time in possession of a writer's naked thoughts; but that which is the truest image of a great intellect, which conveys fully and carries farthest into other souls the conceptions and feelings of a profound and lofty spirit. To be universally intelligible is not the highest merit. A great mind cannot, without injurious constraint, shrink itself to the grasp of common passive readers. Its natural movement is free, bold, and majestic, and it ought not to be required to part with these attributes, that the multitude may keep pace with it. A full mind will naturally overflow in long sentences, and in the moment of inspiration, when thick-coming thoughts and images crowd upon it, will often pour them forth in a splendid confusion, dazzling to common readers, but kindling to congenial spirits. There are writings which are clear through their shallowness. We must not expect in the ocean, the transparency of the calm inland stream. For ourselves, we love what is called easy reading perhaps too well, especially in our hours of relaxation; but we love too to have our faculties tasked by master spirits. We delight in long sentences, in which a great truth, instead of being broken up into numerous periods, is spread out in its full proportions, is irradiated with variety of illustration and imagery, is set forth in a splendid affluence of language, and flows, like a full stream, with a majestic harmony which fills at once the ear and the soul. Such sentences are worthy and noble manifestations of a great and far-looking mind, which grasps at once vast fields of thought, just as the natural eye takes in at a moment wide prospects of grandeur and beauty.

We would not indeed have all compositions of this character. Let abundant provision be made for the common intellect. Let such writers as Addison (an honoured name) "bring down philosophy from heaven to earth." But let inspired genius fulfil its higher function of lifting the prepared mind from earth to heaven. Impose upon it no strict laws, for it is its own best law. Let it speak in its own language, in tones which suit its own ear. Let it not lay aside its natural port, or dwarf itself that it may be comprehended by the surrounding multitude. If not understood and relished now, let it place a generous confidence in other ages, and utter oracles, which futurity will expound. We are led to these remarks not merely for Milton's justification, but because our times seem to demand them. Literature, we fear, is becoming too popular. The whole community is now turned into readers, and in this we heartily rejoice; and we rejoice too that so much talent is employed in making knowledge accessible to all. We hail the general diffusion of intelligence as the brightest feature of the present age. But good and evil are never disjoined; and one bad consequence of the multitude of readers is, that men of genius are too anxious to please the multitude, and prefer a present shout of popularity to that less tumultuous, but deeper, more thrilling note of the trump of fame, which resounds and grows clearer and louder through all future ages.

We now come to a much more serious objection to Milton's prose writings, and that is, that they are disfigured by party spirit, coarse invective, and controversial asperity; and here we are prepared to say, that there are passages in these works which every admirer of his character must earnestly desire to expunge. Milton's alleged virulence was manifested towards private and public foes. The first, such as Salmasius and Morus, deserved no mercy. They poured out on his spotless character torrents of the blackest calumny, charging him with the blackest vices of the heart, and the foulest enormities of the life. It ought to be added, that the manner and spirit of Milton's age justified a retaliation on such offenders, which the more courteous, and, we will hope, more Christian spirit of the present times will not tolerate. Still we mean not to be his apologists. Milton, raised as he was above his age, and fortified with the consciousness of high virtue, ought to have been, both to his own and

future times, an example of Christian equanimity. In regard to the public enemies whom he assailed, we mean the despots in church and state, and the corrupt institutions which had stirred up a civil war, the general strain of his writings, though strong and stern, must exalt him, notwithstanding his occasional violence, among the friends of civil and religious liberty. *That* liberty was in peril. Great evils were struggling for perpetuity, and could only be broken down by great power. Milton felt, that interests of infinite moment were at stake; and who will blame him for binding himself to them with the whole energy of his great mind, and for defending them with fervour and vehemence? We must not mistake Christian benevolence, as if it had but one voice, that of soft entreaty. It can speak in piercing and awful tones. There is constantly going on in our world a conflict between good and evil. The cause of human nature has always to wrestle with foes. All improvement is a victory won by struggles. It is especially true of those great periods, which have been distinguished by revolutions in government and religion, and from which we date the most rapid movements of the human mind, that they have been signalized by conflict. Thus Christianity convulsed the world and grew up amidst storms; and the Reformation of Luther was a signal to universal war; and Liberty in both worlds has encountered opposition, over which she has triumphed only through her own immortal energies. At such periods, men gifted with great power of thought and loftiness of sentiment, are especially summoned to the conflict with evil. They hear, as it were, in their own magnanimity and generous aspirations, the voice of a divinity; and thus commissioned, and burning with a passionate devotion to truth and freedom, they must and will speak with an indignant energy; and they ought not to be measured by the standard of ordinary men in ordinary times. Men of natural softness and timidity, of a sincere but effeminate virtue, will be apt to look on these bolder, hardier spirits, as violent, perturbed, and uncharitable; and the charge will not be wholly groundless. But that deep feeling of evils, which is necessary to effectual conflict with them, and which marks God's most powerful messengers to mankind, cannot breathe itself in soft and tender accents. The deeply moved soul will speak strongly, and ought to speak so as to move and shake nations.

We have offered these remarks, as strongly applicable to Milton. He reverenced and loved human nature, and attached himself to its great interests with a fervonr of which only such a mind was capable. He lived in one of those solemn periods which determine the character of ages to come. His spirit was stirred to its very centre by the presence of danger. He lived in the midst of the battle. That the ardour of his spirit sometimes passed the bounds of wisdom and charity, and poured forth unwarrantable invective, we see and lament. But the purity and loftiness of his mind break forth amidst his bitterest invectives. We see a noble nature still. We see that no feigned love of truth and freedom was a covering for selfishness and malignity. He did indeed love and adore uncorrupted religion, and intellectual liberty, and let his name be enrolled among their truest champions.

(To be Continued.)

The Doctrines of the Reformation.

(Continued from page 5.)

We have shown, we trust, that the doctrines of the Reformation are such, and such alone, as all Protestants of every denomination agree in, and agree in, too, *as* Protestants, as opposers of the Roman Catholic faith. "Had you, in those times which tried men's souls, and not their metaphysical capabilities, sought a place for the Trinity, or for Election, among the doctrines in question, you would have been told they had nothing to do with the Reformation. Subjects of greater and more pressing importance were agitated during that stormy period. The right of Free Inquiry itself was not yet established. Men had first to clear away absurdities that appealed to their senses, before they entered upon the thorough consideration of opinions, that required the utmost stretch of intellectual abstraction."

We are far from denying that the doctrines of Original Sin, of the Trinity, of Election and Reprobation, were held by several of the Reformers. But we ask, from whence were they derived? and we answer, Not from the Reformation. Many centuries previously, the toy-work phraseology of the Athanasian creed had proclaimed the Trinity, and the metaphysics of Augustine had broached another of these doctrines. They were not attacked first,

because they did not directly bear upon men's liberty, property, consciences, and domestic happiness. "And, because they escaped, forsooth, they must be called the doctrines of the Reformation! They existed in spite of it. They were not fostered in its bosom; but were accidentally entangled, and preserved in the skirts of its garments. Whether they were true or false, scriptural or unscriptural, they were exactly those things which *never were reformed.* And, seriously, their true title would be, doctrines of Non-Reformation. Call them, if you please, the sediments of the Reformation, or refuse of the Reformation, or wrecks of the Reformation; but, if there be any truth in history, or reality in fact, or use in language, call them not doctrines of the Reformation."

The doctrine of transubstantiation needs no exposure, it bears its own condemnation along with it; 'tis the most monstrous and barefaced attempt to impose on the credulity of the human understanding, that was ever undertaken. Our surprise is, not that it was exploded at the Reformation, but that it ever got a footing in the world. What, however, have not tyranny and priestcraft attempted; what, alas! in the ages that are gone, have they not effected.

The sale of indulgences was scarcely less monstrous in its nature and tendency, than the doctrine of transubstantiation. An individual might purchase from his priest, for a definite period, an indulgence, under whose authority he might revel in wickedness, and, at the conclusion of the time, his heart would still be right with God, absolution for past offences being administered. It was against this assumption of the prerogative of God to forgive sin, that the Reformers protested; it was the crying evils which this system produced in the world, that roused against it the indignant feelings of the friends of virtue and humanity.

The Scriptures had, in fact, for centuries, been a sealed book to the great mass of the people. They knew no more of their contents, than they did of religious liberty; they were slaves, and ignorant and brutal slaves. When, therefore, the Reformers began to multiply copies of the prohibited book, the popes issued their bulls, and kings published their edicts. Here is one by Henry V. of England,—"That whosoever they were, that should read the Scriptures in the mother tongue [which was then called

Wickliffe's learning], they should forfeit land, cattle, life, and goods, from their heirs for ever; and so be condemned for heretics to God, enemies to the crown, and most arrant traitors to the land."

The Reformers on the continent, circulated copies of the Bible in Greek and Hebrew; and these are the terms employed by the monks of that period, in reference to this point:—"A new language has been invented, which is called Greek; guard carefully against it, it is the mother of every species of heresy. I observe in the hands of a great many people, a book written in this language, which they call the New Testament; it is a book full of thorns and serpents. And with respect to Hebrew, it is certain, that all who learn it, are instantly converted into Jews!"

Such was the spirit of ignorance, prevalent at the era of the Reformation. Was it not high time that a reform should take place? It was maintained at a solemn sitting of the parliament of Paris, by a large body of the clergy, that religion was undone, if the study of Greek and Hebrew was permitted. And, truly, the sooner a religion which could lead its votaries to utter the assertions just quoted, was undone, the better for the race of man. Had might overcome right at the Reformation, to what a state would mankind have been reduced—their birth-right, ignorance; their portion, superstition; their inheritance, slavery.

The sufficiency of the Scriptures, the right of individual judgment, and of fearless free inquiry, are, then, the principles, which are alone worthy to be denominated the doctrines of the Reformation. Those who carry on the views which animated the bosoms of their glorious forerunners, are worthy to bear the name of Christian Reformers. But if, instead of so doing, they bow down to doctrines similar in their nature to that of transubstantiation, such as that of the Trinity,—if they embrace opinions which, if practically acted up to, would lead to all the abominations of indulgences, such as that of vicarious sacrifice, and justification by faith only,—if, instead of exercising reason, they decry its use,—instead of searching the Scriptures, suffer their minds to be hoodwinked, they will be unworthy of the sacred name, and will prove that the generous fire which glowed in the hearts of their predecessors, has, in them, evaporated in creeds and articles of faith; they will disgrace their lineage, and manifest them-

selves to be totally unfitted for the great work of human improvement. As Bishop Burnett long since said, "Certainly our Reformation was never perfected, neither can it be, until we all come openly to acknowledge it, and to act upon that principle which was the only ground upon which the Reformation did or could stand, *viz.* that the Scriptures are the only rule of faith to Christians; and that every Christian, as he is to answer to God for his own actions, and not others for him, so he is to judge for himself how he is to act in matters of religion, and not others to judge for him. Where this principle does not prevail, there Popery still remains, though it passeth under the name of Protestantism. And till this principle does prevail, we can expect no completion of that Reformation, which as yet can only be said to have been happily begun among us."

Episcopal Liberality!

"The general result," remarks the Lord Bishop of Jamaica, in his Report of the State of his Diocese, of his and his Archdeacon's observations, "is a *hearty* desire, on the part of the Proprietors and their representatives, cheerfully to promote, as far as their limited means will allow, *any measures* which I have thought it my duty to suggest, *for the benefit of the Church.* Public meetings have been called in many parishes, and private subscriptions entered into, to promote *the same desirable object.*" "With respect to the instruction of the Negroes," he adds, "I have *proposed,* by way of *experiment,* that the children of three or four contiguous estates, should, with *the consent of the Proprietors,* be assembled twice in the week, to receive *oral* instruction from any clergyman or catechist, *properly licensed.* From the *best consideration* I can give the subject, and from *experience,* I know of no method in the *present state of public opinion here,* liable to so few objections."

From these extracts, one thing is very clear, that the Bishop of Jamaica, whatever may become of the interests of the Slave, has been chary enough of the interests of the Church, and of her sons. The Planters, it seems, will *cheerfully* promote *any* measures which the worthy Bishop pleases to recommend. Now this is the right spirit. For our parts, we admire thorough-going in all

cases; we are no friends to half-measures. What a Bishop recommends, must, of course, be good; and good, because he recommends it: and no honest and pious dealer in human flesh and blood, would ever dream of gainsaying his requirements! Nor have the Planters confined themselves to good intentions; the Bishop expresses great satisfaction (and we doubt not, he feels what he expresses), in being able to announce, that a Bill for placing *fully* and *effectually* in his hands, the ecclesiastical regimen over the clergy, had passed into a law. And, moreover, by this Act, he adds, the Clergy are exempted from *the interference of parish vestries*, and the *minimum* of their salaries is raised to *six hundred pounds per annum*. Now these good people, the Planters, have blustered a great deal about the infringement of their rights by legislatorial acts of the British Parliament; and yet, here we find them yielding to the Clergy, in so great a degree, as to set them free from "the interference of parish vestries;" nor less faithful have they shown themselves to their pockets, when, at the very rumours of the extinction of slavery, they have clamoured for indemnification for the loss of that property, founded, as it originally was, in fraud and cruelty; yet, now we behold a wonderful conversion. So gracious are they to this Right Reverend Father in God, and to all those who have been duly anointed with his holy unction, that they cannot, for an instant, think of giving less than £600 per annum, to the least sacred of these important functionaries!

We have long since learned, that there is no effect without a cause; and this conduct of the Planters does not form, we imagine, any exception to the rule. Much, we see, has been done for the Bishop and his associates, present and to come; but what *done*, what *devised*, for the *poor Slave*,—for *him* whose interests these men are specially bound to watch, both by the spirit of that Religion which they *profess*, and the spirit of that Constitution and that Administration under which they were appointed? What have these lovers of the Church and of themselves *done* for *him*? Nothing, literally *nothing*. But they have *proposed*, and modest enough is the proposal! Speak no more of clerical domination; was ever plan issued from Right Reverend hands, more humble? It is proposed, that some few children should meet twice a-week, to receive instruction, and this only by way of experiment.

Here are contingences enough,—*proposal*, *experiment*, "*with the consent of the Proprietors.*" And all for what? Why, lauded be said Bishop's goodness, to impart *oral* instruction. Ay, that is well. Close the eye of the mind—exclude the press—bar access to all free inquiry,—men may know too much for Right Reverend Bishops and Clergy, Planters and Slave-drivers. Teach only *orally*—only what your own mouths have sanctified; and teach by these, too, exclusively; for, it seems the lips of none but "*properly licensed*" catechists are "*proposed*" instructors.

Here, then, we conceive, is the secret cause unfolded, of the complaisance of the Planters; they elevate the Bishop and his holy brethren, in the hope that their Reverences will truckle to them. May they be disappointed. But we cannot forbear asking, how long will it be before even the *proposal* respecting oral instruction will be carried into effect? Is this modest proposition, any thing more than to amuse the government at home, to delude the people, and to gain time for evading the measures which threaten the destruction of the horrid traffic in human flesh? What is to become of the present generation of slaves? Where is the plan for their improvement? Are they to perish in vice and slavery, that my Lord Bishop and their Reverences, and those who support them, slave-dealers and slave-drivers, may fatten on the spoils?

In a letter dated Oct. 17, 1825, the Bishop tells Lord Bathurst, that "he feels *convinced*, that the *erection* of additional places of worship, must *precede* every *other* method of instruction." "Schools will naturally follow in the train of churches, and the prejudices against education must be gradually removed, by the effects of regular attendance on the house of God." Not to admire how learnedly a Bishop can write, when he talks of erection of churches as a mode of instruction, we would remark, that in this paragraph, penned subsequently to the first, the good Bishop seems to fear that he has gone too far, wishes to retract his modest proposal, and now is convinced that even *oral* instruction cannot precede the erection of new churches. Can such evasion be outdone? Before these erections be completed, the rising generation will have grown to man's estate, and slavery's worst condition; and then, doubtless, if the people of Britain express not their indignant feelings at such turpitude, and denounce the

traffic in human blood, with words not to be mistaken or evaded—"IT SHALL NO LONGER BE,"—unless this takes place, a new track will be devised to prolong the day of account and the day of liberation. But let not the Bishops and their advocates, the dealers in human blood, take the flattering unction to their souls. This cannot be. Slavery is doomed to destruction. If, in no other way it can be destroyed, let them be assured, the light of knowledge will be converted into the lightning of Heaven, and blast every device against the welfare and emancipation of the aggrieved African.

Sketch of the Rise and Progress of Christian Unitarianism in England.

REGINALD PEACOCK, Bishop of St. Asaph, and afterwards of Chicester, a zealous advocate for a purer system of faith and morals, appears to have entertained objections not only to the deity of Christ, but also to the narrative of his miraculous birth. He was deprived of his bishopric: nor did his consistency and firmness, avail to save him from the ruin which his love of truth had provoked. This was about the middle of the 15th century.

Henry VIII. was the unworthy instrument, and his licentious amours the impure source, of the change in the English Church. Its separation from the Papal See, the work of violence, rather than the result of conviction, was, consequeutly, less complete and effectual than in other Protestant countries. While the Hierarchy, during the reigns of Henry VIII. Edward VI. and Elizabeth, was moulding into its present form, many atoned with their lives, for their rejection of the Trinity; and the names of others are recorded, who, conscientiously adoring the Father only, perished at the stake. The fate of Joan Bocher, is remarkable: the warrant of her death was extorted from Edward VI. by Cranmer, who, for his zeal in promoting the Reformation, himself fell a sacrifice to the same spirit of intolerance. The amiable Prince, moved to tears, is said to have exclaimed to the Archbishop, "I resign myself wholly to your judgment in this matter; it is for you to justify the deed in the sight of God." Joan Bocher was led to embrace the doctrine of the strict Unity of God, by reading the Scriptures alone, then lately translated into English.

From 1566 to 1688, the importation of Socinian books was prohibited, and Bartholomew Legate, who suffered martyrdom in the reign of James I. (1611) extorted the testimony of his implacable adversary, to the faultless purity of his life. The piety and fortitude of these holy men in their last moments, sunk deeply into the minds of the beholders, so that it was judged expedient to punish the assertors of the Divine Unity, by leaving them to perish in secret dungeons. The story of their virtues and their sufferings has perished with them; but there is a hand, we doubt not, which has consecrated their memories in immortal characters, and enrolled their names in the book of life.

The short-lived triumph of the Dissenters, after the death of Charles I. was generally favourable to religious freedom, excepting as it related to Unitarians. John Biddle, a man whose virtues were worthy of all imitation, roused the vengeance of the Presbyterians, by assembling a small body of Christian Unitarians in his house; and, after the restoration of Charles II. died in prison.

The revolution of 1688, which raised William III. to the throne of England, settled the national religion on a secure basis, and Parliament extended toleration to every class of Protestant nonconformists, but the Unitarians. They were treated with extreme rigour, and by the Statute 8 and 9 of William III. severe penalties, restrictions, and incapacities, were imposed upon them *.

In the 17th century, John Locke, the champion of toleration and civil liberty, who not only developed the nature and operations of the human mind, but recalled reason to its legitimate office—the interpretation of the Scriptures, is conspicuous among the asserters of the Oneness of Deity. His treatise on the "Reasonableness of Christianity," and "Notes on St. Paul's Epistles," have greatly contributed to a sound exposition of the Sacred Writings. Thomas Firmin also, an opulent citizen of London, to whose munificent benefactions, few charitable institutions of that period do not bear their testimony. The Unitarian controversy was at that period warmly agitated, and this excellent man

* This Act, however, was "mildness and lenity," compared to those passed by the Parliament of Scotland. By an Act, passed in the reign of Charles II. (1661), and by another, in the first Parliament of William III., a denial of "any of the persons of the blessed Trinity," made the denier liable to "be punished with death, as an obstinate blasphemer."

lent his aid to the printing and distribution of many learned expositions and apologies, which still hold a high rank amongst Unitarian works. Firmin and several contemporary Unitarians remained within the pale of the Establishment. We deeply regret this. It is not for us to sit in judgment on their motives for so doing; but it certainly lessens the weight of their testimony to the truth.

In the same century, a large body of the English clergy looked forward with confidence to a reform in the articles and creeds. They did not secede from the Church, but they refused to sanction, by a renewed subscription, those public tests to which all, when they enter upon office, are required to conform; and, consequently, threw up all future preferment. They enjoyed their opinions without molestation. Not so William Whiston, a man revered for his piety, learning, and integrity. In 1710, for his vindication of the Unity of God, he was deprived of his mathematical professorship in the University of Cambridge, and expelled the College.

Dr. Samuel Clarke's work on the Trinity, prepared the minds of many for his proposed revision of the Ritual of the Church. He expunged from the Liturgy, all those expressions of religious worship, which were not appropriated to the Father; and, with some other alterations, the Liturgy is used by several Unitarian congregations in England, and by one in the United States of America.

Among the Unitarians who flourished at this period, was Sir Isaac Newton, the most illustrious of philosophers. A sincere and humble Christian, he devoted himself habitually to the study of the Scriptures. He uniformly professed his belief in the Unity of God, and defended it in his valuable dissertation on the spurious text of 1 John v. 7.

A petition was, in 1771, presented to Parliament, by clergymen of the Established Church, praying that, for subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles, the Scriptures might be substituted. Their prayer was rejected, and many Unitarians retired from the Church and the Universities. Among the most distinguished, were Wakefield, Jebb, Evanson, and Disney: the first, for his genius and classical acquirements, celebrated throughout Europe.

Theophilus Lindsey (honoured name!) relinquished, for the love of truth, not only his benefice, but all the honours which were within his reach; exposing himself to poverty,

and willing to expose himself, if need had been, to want. The Chapel in Essex-Street, London, was shortly afterwards opened; and Dr. Clarke's improved Liturgy, revised by Lindsey, was adopted in the worship. This, it is believed, was the first edifice in England, consecrated from its foundation, to the adoration of the One God, the Father. The present pastors are, the Rev. Thomas Belsham, formerly professor of theology in a college of Cavinistic dissenters, and the Rev. T. Madge.

We have thus far glanced at the progress of Christian Unitarianism in the English Church. The Dissenters were divided into three sects: Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists. Those who originally dissented from the Establishment, were almost all Trinitarians; so that, of the two thousand ministers, who, in the reign of Charles II., were ejected from their benefices by the Act of Uniformity, William Manning was the only one who rejected the doctrine of the Trinity. The persecution which his friend, Thomas Emlyn, a clergyman of Dublin, had suffered from his colleagues, on account of his opinions respecting this doctrine, and the treatises by which he had defended his cause, induced many to embrace the same faith.

Freedom of investigating truth commenced with the Presbyterians, among whom were more learned theologians, and a more liberal church discipline, than among the Independents or Baptists. In 1718, the Rev. James Pierce, minister at Exeter, who followed up the plan of Locke, by a commentary on Paul's Epistles, was compelled, by the bigotry of some of his Presbyterian brethren, publicly to declare his dissent from the commonly received doctrine of the Trinity. Many imitated his example; and, to prevent farther discord, a council of dissenting clergymen in London was determined on, and more than a hundred assembled. The attempts of those who wished to impose subscription to the Trinity, as it is expressed in the 1st and 2d Articles of the English Church, were frustrated. The opinions of Pierce were not confuted, but farther disseminated, by this contest; and the result was, that the greater part of the Presbyterians in the Western counties of England, gradually embraced all the doctrines of Unitarianism.

The writings of Dr. Lardner contributed essentially to the diffusion of these sentiments among the Presbyterians. In his work on the Credibility of the Gospel History, he

has left a lasting monument of his erudition, industry, and candour. In his Letters on the Logos, and in his Sermons on Philip. ii. 6. he has proved himself an equally powerful antagonist to the corrupters and the opposers of Christianity. Almost all the Presbyterian Dissenters in England, now worship the Father only.

(To be Continued.)

THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

GLASGOW, *October* 14, 1826.

THE friends to the progress of Free Inquiry and Christian Unitarianism in Scotland, will be glad to learn, that, in consequence of a second edition having been called for of our First Number, we have issued a larger impression of the present one. We need not, we are sure, urge our friends in the various districts, to obtain as many Subscribers as they can, seeing, as they must, that the permanent prosperity of the Magazine depends on regular Subscribers, more than on a casual sale.

We have pleasure in stating, that the Lancashire and Cheshire Unitarian Missionary Society, who are desirous of engaging a competent person, as a Missionary, have, lately, secured the services, for three months, of Mr. John Ashworth of Newchurch, Rossendale, Lancashire. This praiseworthy man has long been engaged in preaching, with other meritorious fellow-labourers, to the Congregations at Newchurch, Rochdale, Oldham, Padiham, Rawtonstall, and Todmorden; and is the author of a most interesting account of the rise and progress of the Unitarian doctrine in these Societies, formerly in connexion with the Wesleyan Methodists. They became Unitarians, solely from the perusal of the Bible, and judging for themselves.

The Apocrypha.—The contest between the former supporters in Scotland of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and its present Committee, respecting the Apocrypha, continues with unabated vigour. The Presbytery of Glasgow, at their meeting here, on the 4th October,

unanimously resolved, that, disapproving of their proceedings in regard to this subject, "they did not feel themselves justified in resuming their annual collection in aid of the funds of the Society." So bitterly set against the Apocrypha was one reverend gentleman, that he declared, that "his Bible had the Apocrypha, but he got it taken out some time ago!" We cannot avoid suggesting, that a perusal of "the Wisdom of Solomon," would be quite as profitable as the study of "the Song of Solomon;" and that the Catholics, who if they have not the Apocrypha, will not have the Bible, cannot be much injured by the perusal of chapters bearing such tables of contents as, "They are vain who worship any of God's works as gods, but most wretched who worship men's works"—"Men about to sail, pray to their idols, who are less able than their ships, to save them"—"An acknowledgment of the true God: the folly of idol makers."

Belfast Institution.—We observe that, at the meeting of the General Synod of Ulster, held at Ballymena, in June last, no small irritation was manifested, in consequence of "the serpent of Arianism" having made "rapid and destructive progress" among the students in the College. One speaker remarked, that "the Institution rose like the sun, but was afterwards overspread by the cloud of Arianism. That old snake had insinuated itself into that garden of Eden." It appears that some of the Professors in the Institution, are charged with holding Arian opinions; and the mischievous effects which this circumstance is likely to produce to the cause of orthodoxy, is illustrated by another speaker, who "adverted to Mr. Simpson, professor of divinity in Glasgow College, above a century ago, who not only did great harm in Scotland, but also spread his sentiments so widely among the Presbyterians of Ulster, as to lead to the removal of the Presbytery of Antrim out of the Synod, in 1726; and, he asked, if Professor Simpson, single-handed, did so much mischief, what might not be expected to arise from more than one holding similar sentiments at Belfast?"

It appears, that, at the meeting of the Synod in 1825, a resolution was passed, expressive of their desire, that "none but persons of orthodox sentiments," should hereafter be elected as professors in the Belfast Institution; and they wished the Proprietors of the College to recog-

nise this resolution by a bye-law. To this overture, the Proprietors replied in the negative; and the Synod, at the last meeting, ultimately contented themselves with reiterating their wishes, but in a much milder form.

At this meeting of the Synod, a proposal was made, for a rule to render subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith, imperative. The motion was opposed in an admirable manner, by Mr. Carlile of Dublin, who, though, we believe, he maintains the doctrines of Calvinism himself, seems to understand the genuine principles of Christian freedom. Among many other excellent observations, Mr. C. remarked, that "such enforcements serve but to pervert the mind, to make men hypocrites or knaves. They resemble the putting of words into the mouth of a witness; and such enforcements, and pains and penalties, have been, and ever will be, the means of quenching the genuine spirit of Christianity—of raising feuds and contentions, and thereby drawing our attention from the important concerns that should engage us—and of causing divisions among us, from century to century." There were assembled at the Synod, 50 Elders, and more than 120 Ministers; but the farther consideration of subscription to the Confession of Faith, was postponed to the next year.—"Can ye not discern the signs of the times?"

Many of our readers already know, but others will be gratified in learning, that there are four periodical works published in London, which advocate freedom of inquiry, and the Unity of the Supreme Being; the Monthly Repository, the Christian Reformer, the Christian Moderator, and the Christian Reflector: the last, printed in Liverpool. Twenty volumes of the first have been already published, containing many invaluable papers, on sacred literature. Of the second, eleven volumes have been printed. The Christian Moderator commenced in May last; and the seventh volume of the Christian Reflector is now in course of publication.

THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER will be published on the *second Saturday* of every Month.

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THE

CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

No. 3. NOVEMBER, 1826. Vol. I.

What Evidence can prove the Trinity?

IT will readily be acknowledged, that in all inquiries which depend on moral evidence, the correctness of our conclusions will be very much affected, by the standard of proof by which we try them. If this standard is either too high or too low, if we require either too much or too little evidence, we may disbelieve where we ought to be convinced, or be convinced where we ought to disbelieve. The sceptic, who demands a kind and degree of proof inconsistent with our moral nature, our state of probation, and the analogy of the divine government, is led to throw away the inestimable aids, and motives, and consolations, and hopes of Christianity. The believer in transubstantiation, on the other hand, who is satisfied with evidence insufficient both in its measure and its nature, is led to embrace a faith, which makes the gospel itself incredible, by making it responsible for a doctrine contradictory to nature, to reason, and to other parts of the Scriptures themselves. It is evidently very important, therefore, that we should guard against the danger of requiring too much, or of being contented with too little proof of our religious opinions. For this reason, it seems to be proper, that one who has never critically examined the proofs of the doctrine of the Trinity, should inquire, by what sort of evidence we may justly expect such a doctrine would be accompanied. Mr. Yates, in his "Vindication of Unitarianism," has touched on this subject; but its importance may be thought to justify a more ample consideration.

A doctrine may, *a priori*, or previously to a minute inquiry into its proofs, have a presumption either in its favour or against it. A proposition which is at once perceived to be consonant to reason and the general tenor of the Scriptures, will have a previous presumption *in its favour*, and may be believed to be a true doctrine of Christianity, with little hesitation. On the contrary, a proposition, which is apparently both irrational and un-

scriptural, will have a previous presumption *against it*, and requires a more scrupulous examination, and a fuller and more unequivocal evidence, before it can be embraced. There is a previous probability, for example, that the doctrine of a providence will be found in the New Testament, and a previous improbability, that the doctrine of transubstantiation will be found there.

In applying this general principle, we may safely say, that there is a strong presumption that the Scriptures will not be found to contain any doctrine apparently inconsistent with the unity of God. There is no truth of greater clearness or higher authority, than that there is but One God. Both philosophy and revelation unite in confirming it. The systematical unity and harmony of design conspicuous throughout the universe, extending to the moral as well as the physical world,* lead us to the conclusion, that the cause of all is One. All the arguments, which demonstrate the existence of God, lead us to the same conclusion. They all result in this, that the non-existence of an infinite, original, eternal mind, implies an absurdity, a contradiction, an impossibility. But this reasoning can hold of only one such mind. For, since one such mind is adequate to every effect, if it could be maintained, that more than one could exist, it might be said of *each* of them, separately, that its non-existence is possible; and necessary existence, therefore, could be proved of *neither* of them. That, therefore, which is the essence of every argument for the being of a God, would lose all its force, and Atheism would be established on the ruins of all religion. But, indeed, the existence of one *infinite* mind, excludes, by the very definition of infinity, the possibility that there should be more than one. If we attempt to form the supposition of a second infinite Being, we at once see, that it must, in every particular, be entirely coincident with the first; that is to say, as to all our ideas, it will necessarily be one and the same. "For," to adopt the language of Hartley, in his Essay on Man, "if we suppose more than one, it is plain, since the attributes of infinite power, knowledge, and goodness, include all possible perfection, that they must be entirely alike to each other, without the least possible variation. They will, therefore, entirely coalesce in our idea, *i. e.* be one to us.

* Stewart's Philosophy of the Mind, vol. II.

Since they fill all time and space, and are all independent, omnipotent, omniscient, and infinitely benevolent, their ideas cannot be separated, but will have a numerical as well as a generical identity. When we suppose other beings generically the same, and yet numerically different, we do, at the same time, suppose, that they exist in different portions of time and space; which circumstances cannot have place in respect of the supposed plurality of infinite beings. We conclude, therefore, that there is but one infinite being, or God."

To this great truth, that there is but one God, both the Jewish and Christian revelations lend all the weight of their divine authority. Nothing can be more full and express, than their testimony to this point. It was the great object of Judaism, to preserve this truth amidst the polytheism of the ancient world. So sacred was it esteemed by the Jews, that it was a custom of theirs, even till modern times, to repeat, every morning and evening, the passage of Deuteronomy; HEAR, O ISRAEL, JEHOVAH OUR GOD, JEHOVAH IS ONE. It is needless, however, to multiply proofs of this point, since it is one of those primary principles, *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus creditum.* All Christians, of every name, with whatever inconsistency it may sometimes be done, are compelled, by the force of Scripture testimony, to acknowledge, that there is one God, and that there is none other but He. We are authorised by this universal concession, to take this doctrine as an axiom in all our reasonings on this subject, and to say, that whatever else may be false, this must be true.

As, therefore, the Unity of God stands on the highest possible evidence, we are sure, that all other truths of religion will be *really* consistent with it; and, of course, there is a high probability that they will all be *apparently* consistent with it. We ought to view every proposition, which seems to contradict it, with doubt and suspicion; for we are certain, that such a proposition must either be false, or else, that we do not understand it. We are justified, therefore, in saying, that there is, *a priori*, a strong presumption against any proposition which apparently interferes with the doctrine of the Unity of God. We do not say, that this presumption is so strong that no evidence can remove it. But we must all admit, that, till the compatibility of such a doctrine with this primary

truth, is rendered manifest, every thing must be presumed against it, and nothing in its favour.

Now, there is scarcely any one who will deny, that the doctrine of the Trinity is *apparently* inconsistent with the Unity of God. There is a strong *apparent* discordance, we must all own, between the two propositions, that God is One, and that God is Three. It is not till after many subtile and metaphysical distinctions are made, that any one will pretend that the harmony and consistency between them become visible. This is true of all the technical statements of this doctrine which have ever been given. They have undergone many changes since the doctrine of the Trinity was finally completed, towards the close of the fourth century; but the same essential difficulty still adheres to them all. It must always be affirmed, under some form or other, by every believer in a Trinity in Unity, that *Three*, in some sense or other, *are One*, and *One is Three*. It is true, that while any term of the proposition is declared to be mysterious, ineffable, and indefinable, it is impossible to demonstrate that it affirms a contradiction. We only say of it, that it is *apparently* inconsistent with the doctrine of the Unity of God, in the natural and plain meaning of words. We say only, that, if it mean any thing like what such words *would* mean in any other proposition, it means something, between which, and the assertion that three Gods are one God, it is *difficult* to discern a difference.

The *apparent* inconsistency of the doctrine of the Trinity with the Unity of God, becomes much stronger, when we examine the *practical* statements that are given of it. In speaking of its theory, its advocates secure themselves from attack, by declining to say *what they mean*, and calling that a mystery, which might otherwise seem to be a contradiction. "Unless we have *some notion of* the thing itself," Dr. Wardlaw exultingly asks, "on what principle can we possibly make out its contrariety to reason." But the case is different in the practical statements of the doctrine of the Trinity. When the proposition is entire, and the contradiction would appear manifest, if words were allowed to bear any distinct meaning, its friends protest, that they use the word "Person" only "for want of a better word," and declare, that we have no definite conception in what sense it is to be understood. But when they speak of the "Persons" *sepa-*

rately, their difficulties seem all to vanish. Dr. Wardlaw, after all his grave descant on mystery and things above reason in stating the proposition of the Trinity, when he comes to discourse on the personality of the Holy Spirit, suddenly finds a flood of light open on him. His ideas become as distinct as those of other men, and it is evident, he means by "Person," what every one else means. Thus it is with all the believers of the Trinity. When they speak of the persons who compose it, separately, there is little difficulty in understanding their meaning. They ascribe severally to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, all that goes to make up our ideas of three perfectly distinct Gods. Each has a different name; different agencies or offices; distinct and independent power; and, above all, each is a distinct object of supreme worship and adoration. Of the Father, it may be said, that He is the infinite, eternal, self-existent God: of the Son, it may be said, that He is the infinite, eternal, self-existent God: of the Holy Ghost, it may be said, that He is the infinite, eternal, self-existent God. It is expressly declared, that these are not merely different *names* or different *modes* of operation of the same person. The pronouns I, Thou, He, may be used as freely of each of these different "subsistences," as they may be of three different men. Now, all we say of this doctrine, which applies the name and attributes of God to three distinct and independent agents, is, that, to a common mind, there is in it an *apparent* inconsistency, a *seeming* incompatibility with the doctrine, that there is One God, and none other but He. The most zealous Trinitarian must admit, that if the same proposition were found in the Hindoo Mythology, we should take it, till better informed, for something very much resembling a contradiction.

The use we make of these facts and reasonings, is, not to say that the doctrine of the Trinity *cannot* be found in the Scriptures, but simply, that we should not *expect* it to be found there. There is a very high probability, a strong previous presumption, that it will not be found there. A student of the Bible is bound to take it for granted, that it is not there, till it is proved that it undoubtedly is; he must conclude it to be false, till it is fully and clearly demonstrated to be true. Every thing must be presumed against its evidence, and nothing in its favour. It will prove nothing for such a doctrine, that passages can be

produced, which may possibly mean something like it, unless it can be unequivocally shown, that they *cannot possibly mean any thing else.* We must all sit down to the study of the Scriptures as Unitarians; and nothing but their clear and decisive testimony, ought to make us Trinitarians.

We have suggested, that, in proportion as the previous presumption against any doctrine is strong, the evidence by which this presumption is to be set aside, may be justly expected to be correspondently abundant and clear. This expectation is heightened, in proportion as the sources from which the evidence is drawn, are fewer and narrower. In a case like that of the Trinity, where the doctrine is acknowledged to be of the highest importance, and where the Scripture testimony is the only medium of proof, we may certainly look for the utmost plainness and directness in every proposition relating to the subject. The presumption against the doctrine of the Trinity, and the consequent necessity of an increase of proof to remove it, become stronger, when it is considered, that this doctrine, if proved at all, must *be proved from the New Testament alone;* as we shall now attempt to show.

We are aware, that there is a small number of passages in the Old Testament, in which it is thought some allusions are found to a plurality in the divine nature. If these passages alone, however, were all the support of the doctrine of the Trinity, we imagine none would think them of great weight. No one will say, that a reader of the Old Testament *merely*, would find there any revelation of three distinct objects of supreme religious worship. He would find nothing from which he could infer, that Jesus Christ is the supreme, self-existent God; the Father of Jesus Christ also the supreme, self-existent God; and a Holy Spirit proceeding from them both, also the supreme, self-existent God. We may think, that *after* this doctrine has been clearly discovered in the New Testament, we may find allusions to it in the Old. But no one, I am confident, will affirm, that a reader of the Old Testament *merely, at the present day*, would find there any mention of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in the connexion in which they are now used.

It is generally acknowledged, that this was, in fact, the state of mind of the great body of the Jewish nation, at the time of the appearing of our Lord. It has, indeed, been

very laboriously attempted to be shown, that vestiges of something like a doctrine of the Trinity, are to be found in the faith of the ancient Jewish Church. But it is conceded by Basnage, and even by Allix and Jamieson, that if this idea had ever been entertained, it was lost among the mass of the Jews whom our Lord addressed. Whether right or wrong, they were, beyond all question, wholly unsuspicious of any modification of the Divine Unity. Still, however, our argument admits of taking a less broad position; and, to avoid all possibility of cavil, we shall simply say, that at the time of the introduction of the gospel, it was wholly unknown to any human being, that worship is to be addressed to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

Let it now be considered, with what kind and what degree of evidence we are to expect this doctrine would be unfolded in the New Testament. A doctrine of great magnitude was to be disclosed, against which there would justly arise, at first view, in the mind of every believer in the Unity of God, a very strong presumption. It was not a truth of natural religion, which was simply to be republished and confirmed; but a truth was to be revealed, in apparent contradiction to natural religion. The Jews, too, we must remember, had been accustomed to the greatest solemnity in every thing which related to the great and only object of worship. It was from the "awful top," and amidst the terrors of Sinai, that God declared to them, "I AM the Lord thy God. Thou shalt have no other gods before ME." A most important modification of this commandment was now to be made. Two entirely new objects* of worship were to be revealed, and the first Commandment was now to be so far changed, as to run more correctly thus: WE are the *Lord* thy *Gods*. Thou shalt have no other gods before us. Let those, who deem so highly of the importance of the doctrine of the Trinity, who make it the basis of the gospel, who believe that there is no Christianity without it, who think that all the best

* No Trinitarian can object to this statement of their doctrine, as teaching three distinct and supreme objects of worship. They certainly do represent our Lord to be as much an object of prayer and adoration, as God his Father. Indeed, if the three constituents of the Trinity are three distinct objects of thought, they are also three distinct objects of worship. If they are not distinct objects of thought, how absurd is it to pretend to speak of what we cannot even think!

hopes of man depend on its truth,—let these persons say, with what clearness and what solemnity we might expect such a doctrine to be revealed? Indeed, Dr. Wardlaw, as truly as eloquently, says, "I cannot help considering it as a monstrous insult to the Divine author of revelation, to admit the supposition for a moment, that on such subjects as these it should be necessary to wade through the multifarious opinions of antiquity, in order to understand his meaning. I say on *such subjects as these;* for, if on *these* points there is such a want of explicitness—points that regard the objects of worship, the state and prospects of man, and foundation of his hopes for eternity,—on what subject shall we look for precision? If it were indeed the case, that on such topics as these the Bible is indeterminate, requiring for the explanation of its language the commentary of ancient opinion, the infidel would be furnished with an argument against its divine origin, more powerful than any he has ever been able to produce."

(To be Continued.)

The Apocryphal Question.

(Continued from page 45.)

HAVING promised to consider the Apocryphal question, we esteem ourselves bound to fulfil our engagement, although we revert with great reluctance, to the pamphlets which have robbed us of much valuable time. Indeed, the matter of the publications sent forth by the Edinburgh Committee, is very immaterial; and the spirit very unlike the spirit of the great preacher of truth. Of making many such books there is no end; and truly, much study of them is a weariness of the flesh. The adversaries of the dissemination of the Scriptures on the Continent (for so we must account the Edinburgh Committee, as the Bible will not there be received without the Apocrypha), have written many books, from which the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society may cull enough, and more than enough, to gratify any lurking desire of revenge. Indeed, we consider these pamphlets as a complete exposition of the weakness of the cause they are written to defend, and of the folly and inconsistency of the conduct of the members of the Edinburgh Committee. It was our intention to examine *seriatim* the charges brought against the London Committee, but after considering the six pro-

positions of the "Second Statement," we could not discover any solid argument which could withstand a serious reply. Declamation, invective, sanctimoniousness, and priestly domination, are the characteristics of the pamphlets of the Edinburgh Committee. They abound with loud professions of integrity and righteousness, reminding us continually of him who looked up boldly to heaven, and thanked God that he was not as other men are. Of the Apocryphal books we have before expressed our opinion. They may do much good, but cannot, we imagine, corrupt the principles, or mislead the conduct of any, especially of those who receive with them the writings of the New Testament. Even if they contained a bane, is not the Gospel a sufficient antidote? And is it not better to humour the prejudices of those who will not receive the Scriptures without the Apocrypha, than to feed our own pride, bigotry, and obstinacy, by withholding the Bible? But we are told, with signs of horror, that the Apocrypha inculcates the dangerous notion, that charity and righteousness will secure the favour of God, and that man is not radically corrupt. Blasphemous doctrines!—(We tremble for the book of Proverbs and Job, for the Law and the Prophets.) How is it possible to touch the leaves of this detested Apocrypha, and not become polluted? Why have they so long peaceably slept, even on the velvet cushions of Presbyterian Churches? How long has the spiritual, edifying, pure Song of Solomon been in contact with leasing!

The Apocryphal question has set all Scotland in commotion, and no wonder, for we are informed in the "Second Statement," "We consider the question involved in this painful discussion, as important beyond any thing which ever engaged the attention of the Christian world." This pompous assertion, strongly reminds us of a few lines, in a beautiful passage, which, with a single verbal alteration, we shall quote, as applicable to the conduct of the Edinburgh Committee;—

> A soul immortal, spending all her fires,
> Wasting her strength in strenuous idleness,
> Thrown into tumult, raptur'd or alarm'd
> At aught the Apocrypha can threaten or indulge;—
> Resembles ocean into tempest wrought
> To waft a feather, or to drown a fly.

We do consider all this newly indulged alarm, respecting the dangerous nature of the Apocryphal books,

extremely ridiculous; and, were it not that some worthy, but credulous persons might be imposed upon, we should not think it worth our while to adduce a serious argument.

In opposition to "*the Christians*," we assert, that the general tendency of the Apocryphal books, is to promote the interests of piety and virtue. The books of Ecclesiasticus and the Wisdom of Solomon, were written by men who must have imbibed a large portion of the spirit of heavenly wisdom, from the writings of the Old Testament. The history of the Maccabees, is highly interesting, important, and edifying. The persevering zeal, and undaunted fortitude, displayed by these celebrated disciples of Moses, in defence of their religion, is worthy of all commendation, and has obtained the honourable testimony of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Even the book of Tobit, the subject of so much abuse and ridicule, if we except the fabulous part, which can neither injure nor mislead any reader of common sense, presents an admirable example of filial piety and parental tenderness, of a zealous devotion to the religion of the Old Testament, of a disinterested attachment to the cause of piety, and of the most noble sacrifice of self, in behalf of the sufferers for righteousness' sake. We maintain, that no unprejudiced person can rise from the serious perusal of the Apocrypha, without experiencing an increase of religious knowledge, and receiving additional incentives to a pious and a virtuous life. Yet, notwithstanding our firm conviction of the beneficial tendency of the Apocrypha, we are no advocates for the circulation of these books, bound up with the Holy Scriptures, if the pure Word of God could be generally circulated without them. We would have them published in a separate work. But we are taught in the New Testament, which we receive as the rule of our faith and life, "that we who are strong in the Lord, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one please his neighbour, for his good to edification." Wherefore, in accordance with the advice of the Apostle, we should submit to the prejudices of others in favour of the Apocrypha, thinking it infinitely preferable, that they should have the Holy Scriptures, though accompanied with these books, than that they should be denied the use of the Scriptures altogether. The Bible is able to make men wise unto salvation; and

we have not so little confidence in the efficacy of the word of divine truth, as to imagine that any erroneous doctrine that the Apocrypha may contain, would counteract its influence. We have faith in the operation of the divine principles of Christianity, and cannot for a moment imagine, that the Apocrypha could, *if* its general spirit was in opposition to the spirit of the gospel, exert a pernicious influence on the mind of the Christian. All consistent believers in the divine mission of Christ, receive the New Testament only as the rule of their faith, and the guide of their conduct. "Having a more sure word of prophecy," even the doctrines and precepts of the holy Jesus and his Apostles, we cannot discover the cause of the apprehension of evil, from the circulation of the Apocrypha with the Bible; and we can have but a poor opinion of those principles, which can manifest so much distrust of the efficacy of the doctrines of the gospel, as to allow men to declare, "it is doubtful whether we have not more reason to lament the evil the Bible Society has committed, by circulating the Apocrypha with the Scriptures, than to rejoice at the good it has accomplished." The principles and practices of the Jews, as recorded in the Old Testament, are no rule of faith and life to Christians, much less are the Apocryphal books studied by the disciples of Jesus, to ground themselves in the principles of religion. Christians read the lives of the Patriarchs, not for examples of piety, temperance, and benevolence, for they indulged in many practices, the imitation of which, the world, in its present improved state, would reprobate. Yet the Christian can derive edification from contemplating the characters of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The bitter spirit of imprecation, which David often breathed against his enemies, is utterly repugnant to the benign religion of Jesus. And yet, Christians may read the Psalms of the sweet singer of Israel, without receiving any injurious impressions. The divine spirit of piety, the sublime strains in which the attributes of the Deity are described, will awaken kindred sentiments in the well-regulated mind. The Christian, instructed by his divine Master, reads with the spirit and with the understanding also. Whilst he feels the full influence of these devout strains of sublime piety, he rejoices in the more enlarged and generous spirit of that religion which Jesus Christ has communicated. The disciple of Christ, may, then, be

permitted to read the Apocrypha, which, we venture to assert, contains nothing half so objectionable as many passages in Solomon's Song. It is strange, that this book should ever have been admitted within the Sacred Canon. It may be the work of Solomon, but as it contains not a word relative to religion, no precepts of wisdom, we may conclude, that it was dictated in some voluptuous mood, when "his wives had turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God." The notes at the head of the chapters of this book (though the Bible is "said to be published without note or comment"), would force our thoughts to Christ, and prefigure the love of Jesus and his church, in the connubial endearments of the idolatrous voluptuary and his heathen spouse. That we may not be considered very heterodox, in this our opinion of Solomon's Song, we shall quote a passage from Dr. Durell, Principal of Hertford College, Oxford, and Prebendary of Canterbury;—

"This poem, the Song of Solomon, is generally considered as an Epithalamium composed by Solomon, on his marriage with the daughter of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. And this appears to me the only point of view in which it ought to be considered. In respect to the mystical sense which it is supposed to contain, I must frankly acknowledge, that I cannot perceive the least foundation for it. This notion, I suppose, was originally derived from the Targum, and adopted soon after, by some of the fathers, who, with more piety than judgment, thought, that, as St. Paul compares the union of Christ to his church to a marriage, this poem ought also to be interpreted with reference to the same subject. But how is it consistent with this idea, that neither the name of God, nor of Christ, ever occurs in it? that there is not one religious or moral sentiment to be found? that it is not once either quoted, or most distantly alluded to, in any part of the sacred writings."

Let the Edinburgh Committee, therefore, who pretend to be so zealous for the dissemination of the Word of God, pure and undefiled, consider, whether they are not circulating as Holy Scripture, a book which may have no pretensions to this character.

(To be Continued.)

To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.

SIR,

I hope you will be candid enough to insert the enclosed Answer to the Letter by an Old Hearer to Dr. Wardlaw, and oblige,

Your very obedient Servant,

A FREE INQUIRER.

GLASGOW, 1st Nov. 1826.

To "An Old Hearer" of Dr. Wardlaw.

SIR,

IT may probably surprise you, to be addressed on the subject of your Letter to Dr. Wardlaw, which appeared in No. I. of "The Christian Pioneer;" and many others may think it idle in me to answer that Letter. Were it nothing else than a desire, that a publication which professes to be liberally conducted, and which, certainly has given an earnest of future respectability, should not be stained by such productions as the one to which I am about to advert, it is not unworthy of notice. What is of more moment, however, the interests of "fearless free inquiry," demand that its weakness should be exposed.

Considering, then, the importance of the subject on which it professes to treat, I am constrained to say, that, to me at least, it seems to be one of the most flimsy productions which the vanity of human nature ever laid before the public. It is written in a style the very reverse of Christian urbanity—it discovers prejudices the most blind and bigoted, for the party who has accepted of its feeble suffrages—it deals most illiberally with that system of faith, under which its author lived from "boy to manhood;" it is inconsistent—contradictory—unmeaning.

Notwithstanding these its forbidding features, had your Letter been characterised by any thing like sound reasoning, useful information, or an attempted refutation of the principles to which it simply proclaims itself an enemy, it might have possessed some redeeming qualities. But such is not the case. There is no substance in it. You have avoided saying any thing which is, in the smallest degree, of a tangible nature, and left the accuracy of your opinions, to be tried by the test of feeling and fancy, not by that of reason or argument.

But its merits will be more apparent, upon a closer examination. And what, I would ask, is its real object? Not, confessedly, "to enter into a comparison of the Trinitarian and Unitarian creeds,"—not to state the arguments or Scriptural proofs which weighed in your mind, in judging of a controversy which had, for ages, distracted the Christian world. No. The whole scope of your Letter is, without a word of argument, to proclaim the simple fact, that its author was at one time a hearer of Dr. Wardlaw, but that now he has seen fit to become a member of the Unitarian Congregation.

It is true, you profess to state the reasons which led you to doubt Trinitarianism,—to examine the Bible for yourself, and to become a firm believer in that religion which Dr. Wardlaw opposed. It is with regret, I perceive this to be a profession only, for, had you really given such reasons for becoming that "firm believer," I should then have been enabled to examine them. But the account you give of your conversion, I repeat it, is just that such a conversion took place; that, having been led to peruse your Bible, to read Mr. Yates' and Dr. Wardlaw's books, you became a Unitarian. In the present days of enlightened understanding, when every one is able to give a reason for the faith that is in him—when not even the most celebrated professor in science or theology, would be justifiable in promulgating sentiments peculiar to himself, far less in controverting those of others, without calling in to his aid, the testimony of argument or Scripture—the "calm contemplation and poetic ease," with which *you* repose in the naked announcement of your belief, is, to say the least of it, a presumption truly reprehensible. Such a mode of writing is manifestly opposed to the genius of these times of rational inquiry,—is calculated to extinguish the noblest privilege of a rational mind—the use of reason in religious matters,—and, by slow processes, to introduce an arbitrary and domineering system of controversy, which, ere long, if encouraged, would be felt in its heaviest and deadliest weight.

To the injustice, also, of writing as you have done, I cannot but advert. In every communication of a controversial kind, it is unjust to attack opinions in such a manner, as to deprive your opponents of the opportunity of examining the validity of the arguments which led to that attack. Fair and ingenuous controversy acts not the part

of the assassin, by stabbing its victim in the dark. What would the friends of Unitarianism think of *my* fairness, were I to publish to the world, that, after having studied the history of Unitarianism and Trinitarianism, and the effects they produce on their respective votaries, I was confident the latter was much more conducive to virtuous conduct than the former—that, while Trinitarianism was the safeguard of genuine piety, many who had embraced Unitarianism, had therewith fallen into the most listless apathy on religious subjects, and, in very many instances, had become the victims of a cheerless and heart-withering infidelity. Were I to make all this the object of a letter, without condescending upon argument and instances to bear out my assertions, would you not, at once denounce me an unfair and calumnious writer? Yet this is just what you yourself have done.

I have said you are inconsistent, and your Letter is not without proofs of it. You say, in one part, that you do not intend "to enter into an examination of the Scriptural passages by which Unitarianism and Trinitarianism are respectively supported, for that *is beyond my ability;*" and, in the next sentence, you sympathise with your Trinitarian brethren for being such, under "Scriptural proofs clear as noon-day, and arguments conclusive as mathematical demonstration." Is there nothing anomalous here: no jarring of sentiment? If it is "beyond your ability" to examine the Scriptural passages and arguments for Unitarianism, with what consistency can you say, that such are as "clear as noon-day, and conclusive as mathematical demonstration?" If this is their characteristic quality, why your inability to examine what is "clear to a demonstration?" With your confession before me, I am bound to conclude, that your inability arises, not from their being clear and conclusive, but from their being dark and dubious; and that you have embraced your new opinions, not upon personal conviction, but upon trust. If Unitarianism has on its side, such clear arguments as you allege, I hope you will be candid enough to state them. I am ready to enter into a controversy, and, so long as it is conducted fairly and impartially, I fear not the result.

In such a disquisition, however, I must declare my hostility to all uncharitable feeling or sentiment. With persons solicitous to arrive at the truth, these deserve no

quarter. And here, notwithstanding my readiness to bear testimony to the candour and liberality of many a Unitarian controversialist, I must say, your Letter does not evince a favourable specimen of these laudable qualities. There is, I regret to say, a degree of envious and unmanly feeling displayed, in your comparison of Dr. Wardlaw and Mr. Yates, which it is impossible for you to disguise. You confess Dr. Wardlaw to be "a man of considerable talents and learning," of a "character irreproachable,"—and yet you question, in an oblique manner, his "qualification to teach." Speaking of his controversy with Mr. Yates, you say, you inferred "the weakness of his cause from the defensive manner in which he conducted the warfare." Such an inference is palpably unwarranted. To be consistent, the same cause of inference must make you a disciple of Bolingbroke, a weak-minded votary of Paine, or a deluded believer in the mock-miracles of Prince Hohenloe. For, do not the history of the whole world, the experience of ourselves, and the knowledge of human nature, daily exhibit to us the most infallible proofs, that the pretensions of imposture, and the fictitious claims of infidelity, are presented in a more imposing aspect, are urged with more art and unblushing effrontery, and demand more elaborate and anxious refutation, than do the most reckless and random attacks which can be made upon the truth.

The remark, too, of your acquaintance, which induced you to doubt Dr. Wardlaw's qualification to teach correct notions of the Deity, is utterly destitute of that importance which you would attach to it. What says your friend? Dr. Wardlaw is not capable of teaching correct opinions. Why? because he thinks it sinful to eat the blood of animals. Nothing can be more strained and frivolous. I know not whether or not Dr. Wardlaw is of this belief; but granting that he is, must it therefore follow, that he is disqualified from teaching upon a subject with which that opinion has no connection whatever. The learned Dr. S. Clarke believes in the unlawfulness of eating animal blood, and it is thought that the most eminent advocates themselves, for Unitarian Christianity, would be glad to acknowledge the illustrious excellences of that great man. Nay, it is a fact, that the Missionary, Mr. Wright, one of the present champions of Unitarianism, also declares it to be improper to eat the blood of any animal. The

remark, indeed, is worthy of the superstition of days long gone by.

But I have said enough, to show, from your style of reasoning, that the opinion you have formed on the merits of the Unitarian and Trinitarian controversy, is entitled to no weight whatever. If you announce to the world, your conversion, it is surely your duty to condescend on the arguments and passages by which that conversion was wrought. Before you do this, it is unfair to bias the mind of a single individual, by stories of what you once were, and what you now are. If you do not furnish arguments calculated to produce a rational conviction, that your change of sentiment is the legitimate result of dispassionate investigation, you are not entitled to be listened to. Produce your instruments of conversion, and I am ready to enter the lists with you.

I am, Sir, your most obedient Servant,

A Free Inquirer.

Glasgow, 1st Nov. 1826.

Sketch of the Rise and Progress of Christian Unitarianism in England.

(Continued from page 70.)

The English Baptists have, almost from their origin, been divided into *Particular* and *General;* the one Calvinists, the other Arminians. The General Baptists having rejected the doctrine of the Trinity, the common test of orthodoxy, another secession took place. The larger part of them now profess the Unitarian faith. A party has lately arisen also, among the Particular Baptists, who are called *Unionists*, and are Unitarians in the Sabellian sense. Robert Robinson, a celebrated Baptist minister, became, towards the close of his life, a Unitarian, although he had before written a defence of the Deity of Christ, which is considered one of the best that has ever appeared.

The Independents, always prepared to impose creeds or fulminate censures, fortified their pulpits and societies against every species of new doctrine, initiating even their children in the mysteries of the Trinity, and have thus always remained nearly in the same condition. By continual controversies, however, they have gradually acquired a use of language, which is not, obviously, so much at variance with the words of Scripture. Hence, some

of their ministers and most learned men have become Unitarians. After this manner, Dr. Watts, the distinguished poet and theologian, whose psalms and hymns are used in the religious services, not only of Independents, but of almost every other denomination of Christians, deviated in his old age, very essentially from his former opinions.

Dr. Priestley, one of the very few philosophers who are destined to be celebrated, not only in their own age, but in future ages, was born and educated for the ministry among the Independents. Discovering the errors with which he had early been imbued, he rejected them, joined the Unitarians, and devoted himself with energy to spread abroad the principles he deemed to be the truth of heaven. The disgraceful riots at Birmingham, in which Priestley's house, with many others, was destroyed, as well as his manuscripts, library, and philosophical instruments, excited general attention to the doctrines professed by those, who, in consequence, were exposed to this violence of bigotry and ignorance. And submitting, as he did, to a voluntary exile to America, was the means, by the blessing of God, of spreading there, also, the knowledge of pure and undefiled Christianity.

A short time before his exile, Priestley was instrumental in forming a Society in London, called "The Unitarian Society, for promoting Christian knowledge and the practice of virtue, by the distribution of books." Among other benefits which have resulted from this Society, it ought particularly to be mentioned, that, under its auspices, an Improved Version of the New Testament was published in the year 1808, according to the text of Griesbach, with marginal notes, and a critical preface. Of this valuable work, four editions have been issued from the press. Many institutions similar to that of "The Unitarian Society," have been formed in different parts of England, so that in some one of them almost every Unitarian congregation is included. With these, it is not uncommon to have associated, "Christian Tract Societies," distributing such books as have a practical rather than a controversial tendency.

The reception of Christian Unitarianism among the humble classes of society, caused the establishment in 1806, of "The Unitarian Fund, for the promotion of Unitarianism, by means of popular preaching." By its aid, the pure truths of the gospel have been widely proclaimed,

and its able and zealous missionaries have traversed various portions of the kingdom. County Missionary Associations have also, in many instances been formed, united in carrying the glad tidings of salvation into the cottages of the poor.

Declarations having been made, that Unitarians were still liable, for their faith, to the penalties of common law, notwithstanding the repeal of the Act of William III. and those of the Scottish Parliament, by Mr. Smith's Bill in 1813, and debarred from performing the service of marriage by their own ministers,* and harassed still by the operation of the Test and Corporation Acts, a Society was, in 1818, established, entitled "The Association for the Protection of the Civil Rights of Unitarians."

The necessity of subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles, having excluded all consistent Unitarian youth from the National Universities, the College at York was established and supported by the Unitarians. The principle of study there adopted, is, that no opinions shall be taken as necessarily true; but, that the students, after hearing stated all the thoughts of learned and pious men of various persuasions, which can throw light upon the Scriptures, and above all, by a course of admirable Biblical study, shall, each for himself, judge and profess what he deems to be the truth as it is in Jesus. Many Unitarian students have also resorted to the Scottish Universities, where no tests are imposed; and many educated in colleges of the other sects of dissenters, have become able and zealous preachers of Christian Unitarianism.

The substance of the preceding Sketch, we have derived from a valuable tract in Latin, transmitted to the Continent, we believe, by "the Unitarian Fund." We rejoice in adding, that "the Unitarian Society," "Fund," and "Association," are now conjoined, under the title of "the British and Foreign Unitarian Association." Its objects are, the promotion of Unitarian worship in Great Britain, by assisting poor congregations, and sending out, or giving assistance to missionary preachers—the publication and distribution of books and tracts, controversial and practical, principally in a cheap and popular form—the pursuit of these objects in foreign countries—and the protection and extension of the civil rights of Unitarians.

* On this side of the Tweed, the Unitarian Ministers have this privilege.—Ed.

REVIEW.

Milton's Treatise on Christian Doctrine.

(Continued from page 60.)

MILTON has told us, in his own noble style, that he entered on his principal controversy with Episcopacy reluctantly, and only through a deep conviction of duty. The introduction to the second book of his "Reasons of Church Government," shows us the workings of his mind on this subject, and is his best vindication from the charge we are now repelling. He says,

"Surely to every good and peaceable man, it must, in nature, needs be a hateful thing, to be the displeaser and molester of thousands; much better would it like him, doubtless, to be the messenger of gladness and contentment, which is his chief intended business to all mankind, but that they resist and oppose their own true happiness. But when God commands to take the trumpet, and blow a dolorous or a jarring blast, it lies not in man's will what he shall say, or what he shall conceal. * * * This I foresee, that should the Church be brought under heavy oppression, and God have given me ability the while to reason against that man that should be the author of so foul a deed; or should she, by blessing from above on the industry and courage of faithful men, change this her distracted estate into better days, without the least furtherance or contribution of those few talents, which God at that present had lent me; I foresee what stories I should hear within myself, all my life after, of discourage and reproach. Timorous and ungrateful, the Church of God, is now again at the foot of her insulting enemies, and thou bewailest; what matters it for thee or thy bewailing? When time was, thou couldst not find a syllable of all that thou hast read, or studied, to utter in her behalf. Yet ease and leisure was given thee for thy retired thoughts, out of the sweat of other men. Thou hadst the diligence, the parts, the language of a man, if a vain subject were to be adorned or beautified; but when the cause of God and his Church was to be pleaded, for which purpose that tongue was given thee which thou hast, God listened if he could hear thy voice among his zealous servants, but thou wert dumb as a beast; from henceforward be that which thine own brutish silence hath made thee. * * * But now by this little diligence, mark what a privilege I have

gained with good men and saints, to claim my right of lamenting the tribulations of the Church, if she should suffer, when others that have ventured nothing for her sake, have not the honour to be admitted mourners. But if she lift up her drooping head and prosper, among those that have something more than wished her welfare, I have my charter and freehold of rejoicing to me and my heirs. Concerning, therefore, this wayward subject against prelaty, the touching whereof is so distasteful and disquietous to a number of men, as by what hath been said, I may deserve of charitable readers to be credited, that neither envy nor gall hath entered me upon this controversy, but the enforcement of conscience only, and a preventive fear lest the omitting of this duty should be against me, when I would store up to myself the good provision of peaceful hours." Vol. I. p. 115—117.

He then goes on to speak of his consciousness of possessing great poetical powers, which he was most anxious to cultivate. Of these he speaks thus magnificently:

"These abilities, wheresoever they be found, are the inspired gift of God rarely bestowed, but yet to some (though most abuse) in every nation; and are of power,—to inbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of virtue, and public civility; to allay the perturbations of the mind, and set the affections in right tune; to celebrate in glorious and lofty hymns the throne and equipage of God's Almightiness, and what he works, and what he suffers to be wrought with high providence in his Church; to sing victorious agonies of martyrs and saints, the deeds and triumphs of just and pious nations, doing valiantly through faith against the enemies of Christ; to deplore the general relapses of kingdoms and states from justice and God's true worship; lastly, whatsoever in religion is holy and sublime, in virtue amiable or grave, whatsoever hath passion or admiration in all the changes of that which is called fortune from without, or the wily subtleties and refluxes of man's thoughts from within; all these things with a solid and treatable smoothness to paint out and describe." Vol. I. p. 120.

He then gives intimations of his having proposed to himself a great poetical work, 'a work,' he says,

"Not to be raised from the heat of youth, or the vapours of wine, like that which flows at waste from the pen of some vulgar amourist, or the trencher fury of a rhyming

parasite; nor to be obtained by the invocation of dame memory and her siren daughters, but by devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit, who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his seraphim, with the hallowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases." Vol. I. p. 122.

He then closes with a passage, showing from what principles, he forsook these delightful studies for controversy.

"I trust hereby to make it manifest, with what small willingness I endure to interrupt the pursuit of no less hopes than these, and leave a calm and pleasing solitariness, fed with cheerful and confident thoughts, to embark in a troubled sea of noises and hoarse disputes, put from beholding the bright countenance of truth in the quiet and still air of delightful studies.***But were it the meanest underservice, if God, by his secretary conscience, enjoin it, it were sad for me if I should draw back; for me especially, now when all men offer their aid to help, ease, and lighten the difficult labours of the church, to whose service, by the intentions of my parents and friends, I was destined of a child, and in mine own resolutions; till coming to some maturity of years, and perceiving what tyranny had invaded the church, that he who would take orders must subscribe slave, and take an oath withal, which, unless he took with a conscience that would retch, he must either strait perjure, or split his faith; I thought it better to prefer a blameless silence before the sacred office of speaking, bought and begun with servitude and forswearing." Vol. I. p. 123.

These passages, replete with Milton's genius and greatness of soul, show us the influences and motives under which his prose works were written, and help us to interpret passages, which, if taken separately, might justify us in ascribing to him a character of excessive indignation and scorn.

Milton's most celebrated prose work, is his "Areopagitica, or a Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing," a noble work indeed, a precious manual of freedom, an arsenal of immortal weapons for the defence of man's highest prorogative, intellectual liberty. His "Reformation in England," and "Reasons of Church Government," are the most important theological treatises published during his life. They were his earliest prose compositions, and thrown off with much haste, and, on these accounts,

are more chargeable with defects of style than any other of his writings. But these, with all their defects, abound in strong and elevated thought, and in power and felicity of expression. Their great blemish is an inequality of style, often springing from the conflict and opposition of the impulses under which he wrote. It is not uncommon to find, in the same sentence, his affluent genius pouring forth magnificent images and expressions, and suddenly his deep scorn for his opponents, suggesting and throwing into the midst of this splendour, sarcasms and degrading comparisons altogether at variance with the general strain. From this cause, and from negligence, many powerful passages in his prose writings are marred by an incongruous mixture of unworthy allusions and phrases.—In the close of his first work, that on "Reformation in England," he breaks out into an invocation and prayer to the Supreme Being, from which we extract a passage containing a remarkable intimation of the great poetical enterprise, which he had meditated from his earliest years, and giving full promise of that grandeur of thought and language, which characterises Paradise Lost. Having "lifted up his hands to that eternal and propitious throne, where nothing is readier than grace and refuge to the distresses of mortal suppliants," and besought God to perfect the work of civil and religious deliverance begun in England, he proceeds thus:

"Then, amidst the hymns and hallelujahs of saints, *some one may perhaps be heard* offering at high strains, in new and lofty measures, to sing and celebrate thy divine mercies and marvellous judgments, in this land, throughout all ages; whereby this great and warlike nation, instructed and inured to the fervent and continual practice of truth and righteousness, and casting far from her the rags of her old vices, may press on hard to that high and happy emulation, to be found the soberest, wisest, and most Christian people at that day, when thou, the eternal and shortly-expected King, shalt open the clouds to judge the several kingdoms of the world, and distributing national honours and rewards to religious and just commonwealths, shalt put an end to all earthly tyrannies, proclaiming thy universal and mild monarchy through heaven and earth; where they undoubtedly, that by their labours, counsels, and prayers, have been earnest for the common good of religion and their country, shall receive above the inferior orders of the blessed, the regal addition

of principalities, legions, and thrones, into their glorious titles; and in supereminence of beatific vision, progressing the dateless and irrevoluble circle of eternity, shall clasp inseparable hands with joy and bliss, in over-measure for ever." Vol. I. p. 58, 59.

We have not time to speak of Milton's political treatises. We close our brief remarks on his prose writings, with recommending them to all, who can enjoy great beauties in the neighbourhood of faults, and who would learn the compass, energy, and richness of our language; and still more do we recommend them to those, who desire to nourish in their breasts, magnanimity of sentiment and an unquenchable love of freedom. They bear the impress of that seal, by which genius distinguishes its productions from works of learning and taste. The great and decisive test of genius is, that it calls forth *power* in the souls of others. It not merely gives knowledge, but breathes energy. There are authors, and among these Milton holds the highest rank, in approaching whom we are conscious of an access of intellectual strength. A "virtue goes out" from them. We discern more clearly, not merely because a new light is thrown over objects, but because our own vision is strengthened. Sometimes a single word, spoken by the voice of genius, goes far into the heart. A hint, a suggestion, an undefined delicacy of expression, teaches more than we gather from volumes of less gifted men. The works which we should chiefly study, are not those which contain the greatest fund of knowledge, but which raise us into sympathy with the intellectual energy of the author, and in which a great mind multiplies itself, as it were, in the reader. Milton's prose works are imbued as really, if not as thoroughly, as his poetry, with this quickening power, and they will richly reward those who are receptive of its influence.

(To be Continued.)

To the Rev. Patrick M'Farlane, Minister of St. Enoch's Church, Glasgow.

Rev. Sir,

The Address of the Committee of the Glasgow Continental Society, was lately shown me by a friend. Its contents grieved, though they did not surprise me. Christian Unitarians have too long borne the proud world's

scorn, and have been exposed too repeatedly to the misrepresentation of their opponents, to be surprised at any mis-statement that may be made, with regard to their principles. Your name being appended to this Address, as Secretary, forms a sufficient reason for placing it at the head of this Letter. The obloquy of adducing unjust charges, and of bringing a railing accusation against your brethren, must be shared by the Committee and yourself.

You attempt to excite the zeal of the friends of "vital Christianity" in Glasgow, by affirming, that it is "undeniable," "that Infidelity pervades the Protestant States and Churches on the Continent. Many of the Universities and Faculties of Theology of France and Germany, are the nurseries of Deism, or, what is equivalent, of Arian and Socinian doctrine; and the Pastors whom they have sent forth to supply the vacant Churches, are deeply imbued with these Antichristian principles." I am willing to believe, that you may have been led to make this statement without due consideration, for, I should be sorry to attribute to a professed teacher of the Gospel, intentional misrepresentation. Yet, surely, a little reflection must convince you, that by it you have grievously wronged a highly respectable, virtuous, and enlightened portion of Christian believers. You have made charges which, I am persuaded, you cannot prove, and which must be placed to the account, either of ignorance or bigotry. You have said "that Infidelity pervades the Protestant States and Churches of the Continent, and that the Universities and Faculties of Theology of France and Germany, are the nurseries of Deism." This is a sweeping charge, which, though it may pass very well with those who do not think or inquire for themselves, requires to be substantiated, before it will meet the belief of those who are accustomed to understand before they rebuke. Suspicion is, in my mind naturally excited, as to the truth of the assertion, when I find it accompanied by a charge, which, I am sure, neither you nor the Committee *can* prove, viz. that "Arian and Socinian doctrine" "is equivalent to Deism." By the terms Arian and Socinian, I presume you mean to designate Unitarians. Whether this be so or not, however, though to your vision the difference between these systems and Deism may be so small, as not to be discernible, I shall attempt to show, that, in the eye of reason, there is indeed a great gulf fixed.

A Deist, using the word in the popular sense (though all classes are Deists, who believe in a God), believes the Scriptures to be a fable; the Arian, Socinian, and Christian Unitarian, maintain that they contain the Word of God. Many Deists affirm, that Jesus Christ never existed; those whom you condemn, believe that he lived for our good, and died for our salvation. A Deist contends, that, if Jesus Christ did exist, yet that he was an impostor, and that he who believes in his story, is an infidel to God; the Arian, Socinian, and Christian Unitarian, gladly acknowledge Jesus Christ to have been the way, the truth, and the life, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. A Deist holds the circumstances of Christ's resurrection as a romance and a lie; the others rejoice in it, as the sublimest of truths, as having brought life and immortality to light. Many Deists contend, that the moral code of the Gospel is imperfect, and bad, and impossible to be practised; the Arian, Socinian, and Christian Unitarian, look on it as the guide to eternal life, and light, and bliss. Such are a few of the distinctive differences between Deism and "Arian and Socinian doctrine;" and yet, in your Address, you have dared to represent them as so nearly the same, as to be, in fact, "equivalent." Yes, they are "equivalent," if light and darkness are one and the same thing—if reason and absurdity are "equivalent"—if Christ and Belial mean one person. I am constrained to say, that, for any man or body of men, to send forth such unfounded assertions, to excite popular odium against any portion of their fellow-creatures; or to swell a subscription-list, at the expense of truth and charity, is deserving of the reprobation of every truly liberal mind. If the statements were the result of ignorance, I pity and compassionate; but if they proceeded from intentional misrepresentation—may God forgive the wrong.

Let me advise you to reflect on the mighty minds whom your sweeping charges would involve in condemnation. When you are stating the evidences of Christianity, do you not rejoice in calling up to the recollection of your hearers, that the master-spirits of Philosophy, both natural and mental, Newton and Locke, were firm believers in its truth? Believers, as they were, in the divine mission of Jesus Christ,—defenders, as they were, of Christianity, against the Unbeliever,—how is it, they are to be stripped of the name of Christian, and to be held forth as enter-

taining opinions equivalent to Deism, because they, also, were Christian Unitarians? Be consistent. Either fight the battles of the Gospel against Unbelief, without calling in the aid of Locke and Newton, to which you may now add Milton; range them, as well as Voltaire and Bolingbroke, in the list of Unbelievers; or else, be ashamed of the ignorance and intolerance, which induces you to confound with Deists, those whose chief error in Religion is, that they believe as Locke and Newton believed; because they think, that Locke and Newton believed what Christ taught and Apostles preached. Mark the language of Dr. Watson, Bishop of Landaff:—"Newton and Locke were esteemed Socinians; Lardner was an avowed one; Clarke and Whiston were declared Arians; Bull and Waterland were professed Athanasians: who will take upon him to say, that these men were not equal to each other in probity and Scriptural knowledge? And if that be admitted, surely, we ought to learn no other lesson, from the diversity of their opinions, except that of perfect moderation and good will, towards all those who happen to differ from ourselves." These are truly Christian sentiments and feelings, and I have no doubt, there are many who will think, the charity of the English Bishop contrasts finely with the illiberality of the Scottish Presbyter.

The Glasgow Continental Society have, indeed, volunteered themselves on the forlorn hope. When they have brought France and Germany back again, to what are most improperly termed "the principles of the Reformation," *i. e.* Calvinism,—let them turn to Geneva, "the *cradle* of the Reformation in Switzerland," and see if they can efface the recollection of the deeds of Calvin, in the martyrdom of Servetus, or can stifle the cry which the blood of the righteous sendeth up against the principles which led to its effusion,—let them then pass on to Transylvania, and attempt to uproot the maxims of free inquiry, and the conclusions to which it has led its advocates, in that country;—and, if not satiated with foreign objects, let them pursue their plans across the Atlantic, and reconvert the churches of America to the belief of the Assembly's Catechism;—on let them voyage to our Indian Empire, and recall W. ADAM to the faith he professed, on leaving Edinburgh, as a Missionary to the Eastern hemisphere—let WILLIAM ROBERTS, the native Preacher at Madras, also feel the power of their might—and, let

them finish their compassing of sea and land, to make one proselyte, with RAMMOHUN ROY, the celebrated Brahmin of Calcutta, who, sitting down to an investigation of "the Scriptures, without note or comment," rose from the study, a Unitarian Christian. Then may they return to Britain; and, flushed with conquest, evangelise their native land; bring in the South to the true faith; subdue the Principality; and even destroy the "Serpent of Arianism," who, according to the speakers of the Ulster Synod, is making such destructive ravages in Ireland.

The best advice which can be given to the members of the Glasgow Continental Society, is, to stay at home. They may find enough to do here, in instructing the ignorant, and reforming the vicious. Let them put in practice, here, the concluding words of their own Address: "to redeem the time, to meet with readiness that spirit of inquiry which so generally prevails—to cherish the flame which is already kindled, and, with the help of God, to cause it to burst forth in the glories of a new Reformation, a more permanent revival of *real* Christianity."

To use the words of the Bishop of Landaff, "I take my leave of you, with freely expressing a general wish, That we may all of us, in our respective stations, become more disposed to provoke one another *unto love and to good works*, and less disposed to backbite and devour one another for our opinions—that Christianity may have its root in our hearts, rather than in our heads—that it may show forth its fruit in the purity and integrity of our lives, rather than in the vehemence and subtilty of our disputes;—in a word, that the time may at length come, when every individual in the Church and out of the Church, Trinitarian and Unitarian, may love his own heresy less than Gospel charity."

I am, neither an Arian nor Socinian, but

A CHRISTIAN UNITARIAN.

GLASGOW, Nov. 4, 1826.

To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.

SIR,

I SEND for insertion, in your publication, the following Letter, addressed to the Edinburgh Star.

I am, SIR, yours, &c.

To the Editor of the Edinburgh Star.

SIR,

HAVING inserted in your Paper, some very illiberal reflections on the Unitarians, in the Review of the Christian Pioneer, you will perhaps admit a few words from one who rejoices in the principles of Unitarianism, as the doctrines of the Gospel. The *candid* reader of the Pioneer, however strongly he reprobates the principles of the work, will allow, that the object of the Editor is, to disseminate the doctrines which he believes Christ and his Apostles taught. To promote the cause of religious truth, and not, as the Reviewer calumniously reports, to uproot the principles of Christianity, is the avowed and sincere object of the Christian Pioneer. "To blacken, as much as possible (says Dr. Campbell, in his admirable Dissertations), the designs of an adversary, in order the more effectually to render his opinions odious, is one of the many common, but detestable resources of controvertists."

The Reviewer denies Unitarians the appellation of Christians; but Christ and his Apostles give this name to all those who express their belief that Jesus is the Messiah. The illiberality of the Church of Rome, in anathematizing dissenters from her communion, ought to have guarded Protestants from indulging in the like antichristian spirit. "Judge not, that ye be not judged," is a Christian maxim, which drops from the lips of many professors, but apparently sinks into the hearts of few.

That Unitarianism is the half-way-house to Infidelity, is one of those illiberal and false, but popular assertions, which a disingenuous adversary employs to render odious, opinions which he cannot refute. Abuse and misrepresentation, are a vulgar and ready substitute for argument. That Unitarianism leads to Infidelity, is doubtless the belief of the bigot ignorant of our principles. His credulity we compassionate, and his impotent threats we despise. But this misrepresentation is frequently echoed by *interested* polemics, who themselves disbelieve the slanderous accusation—by men, who throw fire-brands, arrows, and death, and say, are we not in sport. Unitarians regard neither Dr. Priestley, nor Mr. Belsham, nor Mr. Lindsey, nor any uninspired teacher, as their master; but, Jesus they receive as their leader, in his steps they desire to

walk, and to his instructions they submit with unlimited deference.

The assertion, that almost all the students who were educated in Unitarianism, at the Hackney Academy, under Mr. Belsham, became avowed infidels, is a gross mis-statement. I could name many highly respectable ministers of our denomination, educated under Mr. Belsham, who are now preaching the Gospel in various parts of England, and are ornaments to their profession. That a few of the Hackney students, during the wonderful revulsion produced in the human mind by the French Revolution, were induced, in that period of high excitement, to involve in one sweeping condemnation, Christianity and its corruptions, domineering priests and the humble ministers of Jesus, must be admitted. Unitarianism, however, did not lead to this lamentable defection; it was the innovating spirit of the age, which rejoicing in the downfall of tyranny, superstition, and priestcraft, did not stop to discriminate between religion and superstition, tyranny and rational liberty. But, I ask, did no other college send forth infidels?—was even Edinburgh University immaculate?

That the Hackney Academy was broken up, in consequence of Infidel principles, is another gratuitous statement utterly destitute of truth. "The principal, and, in truth, the only cause of the failure of the Institution, was the unfortunate purchase of the estate at Hackney, which involved the Committee in an expense of building, and a load of debt, which the funds of the Institution never were, nor could have been able to support. The creditors became clamorous, and it was necessary to sell the estate to great disadvantage, in order to pay off the debt."

I ask, who, during the storm of the French Revolution, stood forward as the firmest advocates of the truth of Revelation? who, during the dissemination of infidel principles, were the most zealous and successful champions of Divine Truth, in opposition to the daring attacks of English Deists, and French Philosophers? I need only mention Gilbert Wakefield, and the injured name of Priestley, who, in season and out of season, attacked the strongholds of Infidelity; whilst others, pluming themselves on their Orthodoxy, were carelessly slumbering at their posts. That Unitarianism does not lead to Infidelity, might be proved from a long list of Christians, who have

taken refuge in these cheering and purifying principles, from the gloomy abyss of unbelief, into which the popular systems of Christianity were hurrying them. But I shall content myself with the following testimony of the celebrated Robert Robinson of Cambridge, author of a work entitled, a "Plea for the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ." Of this work, which was pronounced unanswerable, the writer lived to show the fallacy, by his conversion to the principles he opposes in it, like Whitby, who, in 'his Last Thoughts,' advocates the principles which he strenuously opposed in his celebrated Commentary. In a letter addressed to Dr. Priestley, Robinson says, "I am indebted to you, for the little I know of rational, defensible Christianity. But for your friendly aid, I fear I should have gone from enthusiasm to Deism; but a faith founded on evidence rests upon a rock."

A UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN.

EDINBURGH, Oct. 25, 1826.

One Hundred Scriptural Arguments for the Unitarian Faith:—published in Boston, by the American Unitarian Association.

(Continued from page 32.)

11. Because, the *head* of Christ is *God.* "I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and *the head of Christ is God.*"—1 Cor. xi. 3.

12. Because, in the same sense in which we are said to belong to Christ, *Christ* is said to *belong to God.* "And ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."—1 Cor. iii. 23.

13. Because, Jesus affirms, in another connexion, and without the least qualification, "*My Father is greater than I.*"—John xiv. 28.

14. Because, he virtually *denies that he is God,* when he exclaims, "why callest thou *me good?* There is none good but *one,* that is God."—Mat. xix. 17.

15. Because, it is the express declaration of an Apostle, that the *Father* is the *one God,* and there *is none other.* "Though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) yet *to us there is but one God, the Father,* of whom are all things."—1 Cor. viii. 5, 6.

16. Because, our Saviour, after having said, "I and my Father are one," gives his disciples distinctly to understand, that he did not mean, *one in substance*, equal in power and glory, but *one* only in *affection* and *design*, &c., as clearly appears from the prayer he offers to his Father in their behalf,—"that *they all may be one;* as *thou*, Father, art *in me*, and *I in thee*, that they also may be *one in us*."—John xvii. 21.

17. Because, the *Father* is called the God of *Christ*, as he is the God of *Christians*. "Jesus saith unto her, * * * go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father; and to *my God* and *your God*."—John xx. 17.

(To be Continued.)

THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

GLASGOW, *November* 11, 1826.

WE have sincere pleasure, in directing the attention of our readers, to the first article of our present Number: it is from the pen of the late Rev. S. C. Thacher of Boston, America, and bears, we think, the marks of a clear and well informed mind. The conclusion will appear in the Christian Pioneer, for December.

THE Annual Meeting of the Unitarian Congregation, Glasgow, was held on Sabbath afternoon, November 5th, when the Committee's and Treasurer's Reports were read, and Office-bearers elected for the ensuing year. We gladly insert as much of the Report as our pages will allow.

"CHRISTIAN FRIENDS,

YOUR Committee cannot contrast the feelings of unfeigned satisfaction, with which they undertake the pleasing task of laying before you, a brief report of their proceedings during the last year, with those they have formerly experienced on similar occasions, without sentiments of heartfelt gratitude to that Great Being, to vindicate whose Character, and support whose Truth, we here assemble ourselves together. They congratulate you, on the increasing prosperity of the holy Cause it is our earnest endeavour to promote,—on the more extensive dissemi-

nation of the benevolent and heavenly doctrines it is our happiness to profess,—and on the truly cheering and auspicious aspect which our affairs have now assumed. Twelve months have scarcely elapsed, since our situation was comparatively discouraging:—our adversaries, with the finger of scorn and derision pointed at us, prognosticated our speedy dissolution, and even public thanksgivings were offered up from a pulpit in this city, that the Socinian heresy (as they opprobriously denominated Christian Unitarianism) was at its last gasp!

But, we now gladly take a survey of what has been effected since that period. The hope which had nearly deserted us, and the zeal which had been almost palsied, have been relumed and revived amongst us, animating every heart by their cheering and gladdening influences. Our devotional feelings are now heightened,—our zeal animated to greater exertions, and our attachment to the cause of Truth, daily increased and strengthened. The improvement of the Congregation, both in point of numbers, and respectability of appearance, since Mr Harris's arrival, has far exceeded the expectations of even the most sanguine amongst us. The sittings let, have quadrupled the number of those during the last eight years, and nearly trebled that of any former period since the opening of the Chapel; and the increase in the number of strangers, who occasionally join in our services, has been in nearly the same ratio. During the delivery of Mr. Harris's Course of Lectures, last winter, the Chapel was in every part crowded to excess, and some hundreds frequently went away from our doors, unable to obtain admission. So great was the interest excited in the public mind, that your Committee requested Mr. Harris to re-deliver the Lectures; and our library, although tolerably extensive, was found quite inadequate to supply the unprecedented demand for books. Nearly two thousand tracts were also gratuitously distributed at the door. It ought not, perhaps, to be omitted, that the number of communicants at the Lord's Supper, has also increased far beyond our hopes. The state of our finances, notwithstanding the great distress which has pervaded all classes of the community, and the necessarily heavy amount of our expenditure during the last year, is extremely cheering: in confirmation of which, your Committee beg to refer you to the Treasurer's accounts.

The Treasurer's Account with the Glasgow Unitarian Christian Congregation.

DR.

Seat-Rents, from Nov. 1825, to Nov. 1826,	£116	7	7½
Donations,	31	19	0
Balance from Gas Subscription,	6	10	6
Hymn-Books,	12	18	6
Rents of Cellar and Houses,	57	0	0
Collections at the Door,	211	8	6½
	£436	4	2

CR.

Interest of Debt on Chapel,	£50	0	0
Feu-Duty,	22	0	0
Organist,	13	12	0
Precentor,	6	6	0
Expenses of Removal, to the Minister,	20	0	0
The Minister's Salary, from 1st Oct. 1825, to 6th Nov. 1826,	225	0	0
Insurance, Poor of Congregation, Printing, Gas, &c.	28	19	0
Hymn-Books, Binding, &c.	10	4	10
Repairs of Chapel, Painting, &c.	40	4	9
Sundries,	18	3	6½
Balance on hand,	1	14	0½
	£436	4	2

A Society, justly denominated "The Benevolent," has been instituted, to relieve the necessities of our brethren in sickness; there are now 99 members, and the funds are in a very prosperous condition.

Schools have been established, for the education of children of every religious denomination. The Sabbath School commenced on the first Sunday of last April, with 52 scholars; the number has since much increased, and, although frequently greater, it may be fairly estimated, that about 160 boys and girls (regular attendants) are now receiving there the elements of useful knowledge. In addition to reading, spelling, and exercises in memory, the children are, on two week evenings, taught writing and arithmetic; and their attention and improvement

have, in general, been highly satisfactory to their teachers. Your Committee also cannot deny themselves the gratification of referring to the establishment of a monthly periodical publication, "The Christian Pioneer," from which, judging from the excellency of the two numbers now before the public, and the general interest and attention excited by them, they are sanguine in anticipating the most beneficial results. They have also much pleasure, in noticing the great and encouraging success which has attended the unwearied, zealous labours of Mr. Harris, in conjunction with Mr. Bakewell of Edinburgh, at Carluke. Aware, however, that the *people*, as well as the Pastor, must do *their* part; that *they* also must not be weary in well-doing, your Committee would beg leave, in conclusion, earnestly and respectfully to recommend to their brethren, and deeply to impress upon their own minds, the necessity of not relaxing in their exertions. Although much has been done, let us not sit down contented, forgetting how much is still before us. Having put our hands to the plough, let us not look back. May we be steadfast and immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. Let every one amongst us, however humble his sphere, strengthen the hands and encourage the heart of our respected Pastor, by zealously co-operating with him in the good work; and let it be deeply impressed on the minds of every individual here present, that in no possible way can he do this so effectually, as by establishing it as a fixed principle within him, that nothing, but necessity the most urgent, shall henceforth induce him to absent himself from this house of prayer. Let each one of us feel as though the success of rational Christianity—of Christian philanthropy, depended on his single exertions. And may the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ crown all our efforts with his blessing.

Glasgow, 4th Nov. 1826.

A Unitarian Meeting-House, in Hulme, Manchester, was opened for Sunday Evening Worship, on Sunday, 1st October, when a very eloquent and impressive Sermon was preached by the Rev. J. G. Robberds of Manchester, from the words of our Saviour, "I and my Father are one;" in which, he clearly showed, that the declaration was strictly Unitarian, and perfectly in accordance with

the views which we, as Unitarian Christians, entertain of the person, character, and office of the Messiah. The following Unitarian Ministers of Manchester and its neighbourhood, are delivering a Course of Lectures, on the under-mentioned subjects, at Hulme:—The Rev. Messrs. Johns, Harrison, Robberds, Holland, Hawkes, Whitelegg, Worthington, and Tayler,—on the Scriptural view of God, of Christ, of the Holy Spirit, of Human Nature, of Temptation, of Redemption, of Conversion, of Prayer, of Love to God, of Love to Christ, and on the Close of the Year.

On Monday Evening, the 6th November, about One hundred Members, Male and Female, of the Unitarian Congregation of this City, drank tea together in the Trades' Hall. The Rev. George Harris was in the Chair. The Meeting commenced with prayer; and, after tea, a hymn of thanksgiving was sung. Various sentiments were given in the course of the Evening, which called forth many animated addresses. Among the sentiments given, were those of "Our brethren of every religious denomination; may they pursue their inquiries with honest and fearless hearts; and, though divided on earth, may we meet in heaven." "The Bishop of Norwich." "Catholic Emancipation." "The progress of Knowledge." "The Memory of the Martyred Servetus." The Meeting was closed with singing and prayer.

It is a common charge against Unitarian Christians, that they deny Christ. We think those who prefer it, should weigh well the justice of the accusation, on learning the subjects of a Course of Lectures, delivering in the Unitarian Meeting-house, Salford, Manchester, by the Rev. J. R. Beard:—On Sin, its nature and effects; Jesus Christ, the Saviour; the Mediator: Preaching Christ Crucified; Faith in Christ; Denying Christ; Love to Christ; Imitating Christ; and Abiding in Christ.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Communications have been received from Carluke—Veritas—a Country Blacksmith—J. N.—Nepos—J. R. B.—and J. F. We shall be glad to receive the article on the Influence of the Imagination on Education.

Communications for The Christian Pioneer, are requested to be addressed (Post paid) to the Editor, care of Messrs. Hedderwick & Son, Printers, Glasgow.

THE

CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

No. 4. DECEMBER, 1826. Vol. I.

On the Duration of Future Punishment.

ON the subject of future punishment, three different opinions have been entertained.

1. The first of these is expressed in the following terms in the Assembly's Catechism:—"The punishments of sin in the world to come, are everlasting separation from the comfortable presence of God, and most grievous torments in soul and body, without intermission, in hell fire for ever." One broad line of distinction is thus drawn between the righteous and the wicked; and "the number" of both, we are told, "is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished." While the former are destined to enjoy all the pleasures and delights of the heavenly state, in an equal and inconceivable degree, notwithstanding the shades of difference which must necessarily exist, even among the righteous themselves; the latter are indiscriminately doomed to suffer the most excruciating torments of body and mind, through the countless ages of eternity.

It is needless to dwell upon the appalling and fatal consequences of a doctrine like this. If God is the wise and benevolent being which the Scriptures represent him, it is clear, that he must have created man for a state of happiness. But how shall we reconcile with our ideas of infinite and perfect goodness, the dooming of myriads of intelligent beings to pains and torments without end; and what shall we think of the character of that God who imparts existence to his creatures with a previous determination, that, instead of a blessing, it shall prove to the great majority of them, a real and everlasting curse? We leave these inquiries, for the solution of those whose representations of the Deity have given rise to them, and pass on to the second opinion which has been entertained by Christians, concerning the object and extent of future punishment.

2. The real object of punishment, it is said, must be in all cases the same; and that object, on the preceding

hypothesis, is the infliction of misery. But, granting that this definition of punishment is correct, it has been argued, that the offences of a finite being cannot justly be visited with the infliction of infinite misery. "Were it possible," says Michaelis,* "to put a stop to the most formidable of all crimes by a slight punishment, we ought, in justice, to choose the very least that will be sufficient for that purpose;" since any thing beyond this, would only be "a foolish and cruel waste of evil." On these grounds, then, it has been proposed to substitute the following definition, as more correct than the former one, and more agreeable to the character of a wise and benevolent being. "Punishment is the infliction of pain, in consequence of the neglect or violation of duty, with a view to correct the evil."† "If this definition is founded in truth, and if it is admitted, that the correction of evil is the only legitimate object of punishment, it follows, as a necessary consequence, that no punishment can be without end," because "a punishment which is both corrective and endless, is a contradiction in terms." It follows also, "that no more punishment than what is absolutely necessary to produce reformation, and to eradicate sin, will be imposed;" because, "he who endeavours to correct an evil, will accomplish his object as speedily, and with as little loss of happiness as possible." It also follows, that the misery produced by sin will not be eternal, but that the period will arrive, however distant, (even though millions of ages should intervene,) when the benevolent intentions of the Deity, in the creation of the human race, will be accomplished, and mankind, gradually freed from the debasing effects of sin, will be restored to the favour of the Almighty, and admitted to the enjoyment of pure, unmixed, and never-ending happiness. This cheering doctrine, now generally held by that class of Christians denominated Unitarians, is at least as old as the days of Origen, who lived in the third century, and wrote expressly in its defence. It was held also by Clemens Alexandrinus, the master of Origen, and many other celebrated fathers of the Christian church. It was adopted by the German Baptists, whose opinions had made considerable progress

* Commentaries on the Mosaic Law, translated by Alex. Smith, D.D. vol. IV. p. 375.

† Illustrations of the Divine Government, by T. Southwood Smith, (2d ed.) p. 134.

on the Continent, at the time of the Reformation. It has also met with able defenders, in some of the most distinguished divines which the Church of England has produced. It formed the leading doctrine of the followers of Winchester, who wrote a series of dialogues in its defence, in which the principal objections to it are fairly stated and considered; and has given rise to a new sect of Christians in America, whose numbers are increasing with astonishing and unprecedented rapidity. A late writer, who has published a work entitled "Dissertations on Futurity," proposes the following singular modification of this doctrine. "The spirit of God," says he, "has made choice of an ambiguous term, acknowledged on both sides, sometimes to be an eternal, and sometimes only a temporary duration, with the wise view, that men might live in fear of everlasting punishment, because it is probable that it may be everlasting; and, at the same time, that God may be at liberty, without impeachment of his faithfulness and truth, to inflict either finite or infinite punishment, as his divine wisdom, power, and goodness, shall direct."

3. Besides the two systems already described, there is third, which teaches, that the wicked, after having undergone a course of punishment exactly proportioned to their respective degrees of guilt, will be annihilated, or blotted as completely out of existence as if they had never been. It was this notion, engendered, no doubt, by hypochondria, which imparted to the mind of the amiable Cowper, that feeling of gloom and despondency, which cast a withering shade over all the gayer and more sportive productions of his imagination. We are told, that, under the influence of great depression of spirits, he was led away by the idea, that the Author of his existence had recalled the loan; and that, as he failed to restore it at the appointed season, his Maker had devoted him to everlasting destruction. With a view to this incident in Cowper's life, the Editor of his "Private Correspondence"* puts the following question:—"I would ask those who have inadvertently charged the unhappiness of this pitiable sufferer, on his religious opinions, to the operation of what theological tenets they can warrantably ascribe the supposition, not only of so preposterous a demand, but of a

* Preface, p. xvi.

denunciation under such circumstances, more preposterous still, as referred to the Supreme Being? It will readily be conceded, I trust," adds this writer, "that as no known system of divinity can be justly charged with such absurd principles, as the above supposition would imply, so that which Cowper adopted (whatever it might be), unquestionably cannot." Certain it is, however, that, to whatever cause this unhappy notion is to be ascribed in the case of Cowper, men of the most cultivated minds, and of the highest reputation for wisdom and piety, have maintained this doctrine, and drawn their arguments in its favour, from the pure and uncorrupted sources of genuine Christian truth. They have contended, that the words translated *eternal* and *everlasting*, cannot properly signify limited duration; that there may be everlasting punishment, without everlasting misery; that the former is the sentence invariably denounced upon the wicked, in the Sacred Writings; that those passages of Scripture, in which it is said, that the wicked shall perish or be destroyed, are clearly in favour of this doctrine; and that the second death mentioned in the Book of the Revelation, is decisive and final upon the subject. They contend, that death is the utter extinction of our being; that we have no assurance of our restoration to life in a future state, but through the medium of the Gospel; that the possession of existence is, in itself, a positive blessing; and that, as a second death is spoken of, and no subsequent resurrection is mentioned, the punishment of the wicked will be nothing more or less, than inevitable and final destruction.

Of the three preceding systems, we feel compelled to give a decided preference to the second, or that which teaches, that all mankind, after undergoing the necessary corrective discipline, will be fitted for the enjoyment of perfect and eternal happiness. How long or how short the time may be, which intervenes before this final consummation of all things, it belongs only to Infinite Wisdom to determine; but that such a period will arrive, in the course of revolving ages, reason appears to prove, and revelation to sanction. To this doctrine, no passage of Scripture presents so plausible an objection, as Mat. xxv. 46. *These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.* There is nothing in the etymology of the original word rendered indiscriminately

"eternal" and "everlasting" in this passage, which should prevent it from being applied in a more limited and confined sense. *Lasting* or *age-enduring*, is more expressive of the sense of the original Greek term *αιωνιον*, than either *everlasting* or *eternal*. It is, no doubt, frequently used to denote unlimited duration; but is by no means restricted to this sense, either by etymology or usage. Its precise import must always depend upon the connection in which it is found, and the subject to which it is applied. Its application, therefore, in the present instance, to the punishment of the wicked and the happiness of the righteous, is no proof that both will be of equal continuance. "The difference between the nature of the two subjects, the difference between the substantives to which the adjective is applied, and the clear testimony of other passages of Scripture, which relate to the final destiny of mankind, all concur to show," as Dr. Smith observes, in his "Illustrations of the Divine Government," "that, in the latter case, it signifies an endless, and in the former, a limited duration. Nor does the affixing of a different meaning to the same word occurring twice in the same sentence, afford any objection to this interpretation." For, no less than three passages occur in the Sacred Writings, in which this very word is twice employed in the same passage, to denote limited and unlimited duration. One of these, however, will be quite sufficient to answer our present purpose; and this is selected only because the word happens in both instances to be rendered *everlasting* in the authorised version of the Bible. "The everlasting mountains were scattered," says the prophet Habakkuk,* "the perpetual hills did bow." Now, surely, no one will contend, that the term *everlasting*, as it is here applied, means unlimited duration. The connection plainly indicates, that the word must be taken in a definite and restricted sense. But the prophet adds, "His ways are everlasting." Here there can be no doubt, that the word is used to denote absolute eternity; for God is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, and to his years there is no end.

The doctrine, however, which it is the object of these remarks to illustrate, does not depend for its support upon the critical meaning of a word. It is taught without am-

* Hab. iii. 6.—*see also* Rom. xvi. 25, 26, and Tit. i. 2, in the original.

biguity or disguise, in numerous passages of the Sacred Volume; and accords with all the ideas which we have learned to form, of the nature, perfections, and providence of God. That the intention of the Deity in creating man, was to produce happiness, is a position upon which the advocates of this doctrine may safely take their stand. "God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good." When life was originally imparted to man, it was intended to prove a blessing to him; and this benevolent intention, we are nowhere taught to believe will be ultimately thwarted, however long the accomplishment of it may be delayed. Evil is partial in its effects, and limited in its duration; but good is lasting in its nature, and coeval with the existence of God himself. "The misery produced by sin, is designed to answer the same benevolent purpose in the moral world, which the pain occasioned by hunger, accomplishes in the animal. That the evil which results from the bad passions of mankind, *may* be made the means of eradicating them, and of training the mind to purity and benevolence, we have unquestionable proof, in the daily events of life. This, then, which we see to be their effect with regard to some individuals at present, we contend, will be their ultimate effect with respect to all mankind. This doctrine reconciles every difficulty, and throws a glorious and cheering light on all the dispensations of the Deity. If it be true, every thing was planned by benevolence; every thing is guided by benevolence; every thing will terminate in benevolence, in exalted, eternal, and ever-increasing felicity to all."* But let it not hence be inferred, that the wicked will go unpunished, or that their punishment will not be commensurate with their guilt. The Scriptures declare, in a language which is equally intelligible to all, that God will reward every man according to his works; but they declare, in terms no less express and positive, that he is long-suffering and gracious towards all, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. While, then, we are careful, on the one hand, to guard against every thing which would delay the accomplishment of God's benevolent intentions respecting us, we may derive comfort from the assurance, that he will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth.

* Illustrations of the Divine Government, p. 58.

It is usual, for the sake of distinction, to divide mankind into two great classes, the righteous and the wicked; and, in ordinary language, this distinction is sufficiently accurate, and answers many useful purposes. But there are many intermediate steps between the truly good man and the profligate and abandoned sinner, which are entirely overlooked in this classification. What is it, then, which constitutes the immense distinction between the moral character of the imperfectly righteous, and that of the partially wicked, that the portion of the one should be eternal misery, and that of the other everlasting life? In the present state, we see that all men are subject to the same discipline, and that no distinction is made by the Deity, in the moral treatment of his rational offspring. The differences which we perceive between the moral character of one man and that of another, are differences of degree, and not of kind; nor is there any reason to suppose, that, with respect to beings of the same order, the case can ever be different. To imagine such a difference, is to suspect God of partiality, and indirectly to charge him with injustice. The very idea is fraught with impiety; and cannot be entertained for a moment by any rational, unprejudiced, and sober-minded Christian. But that God is no respecter of persons; that he views all his creatures with an equal and impartial eye; that he wills the salvation of all, and is able to accomplish every purpose of his will, are truths which stand written on the brightest pages of Revelation, which cast a cheering ray upon the darkness and gloom of the grave, and which will finally conduct us, when the sufferings and imperfections of the present state are at an end, and the period of our moral discipline is completed, to joy unspeakable and full of glory, in a future and eternal world.

O. P. Q.

What Evidence can prove the Trinity?

(Continued from page 80.)

MIGHT we not expect, that our Lord himself would at least *once* have stated the doctrine of the Trinity in express language, and have insisted on the importance and necessity of believing it? Would he not, at least once, have declared formally and explicitly, that the first commandment was no longer to be understood in its plain and literal

meaning; the meaning in which all his hearers had been accustomed to understand it? The word *God* occurs nearly *thirteen hundred times* in the New Testament, and might we not suppose, that, in some one of these passages, we should be expressly told, that the term is meant to include, not simply *one*, but *three* persons or subsistences, to each of which that title is applicable? If, in every instance where this word is used alone, it implies a plurality in the divine nature, should we be unable to find one solitary example of the application of plural pronouns in the whole New Testament? Would neither our Lord, nor any one of his Apostles, have left a single sentence, in which the whole doctrine of the Trinity can be fully and accurately expressed? Should we expect to find no care to make accurate and evident distinctions between the doctrine of a Trinity and the dangerous Polytheistical notion of the heathens? The doctrine of the unity of God is more than once introduced in the New Testament, and laid down most clearly and solemnly. Our Lord himself repeats these most impressive words to the Scribes:—The first of all the commandments is, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." Now, could we have supposed, that, as our Saviour knew this would be construed by all his hearers, as teaching that there is only one object of supreme worship, he would have omitted such an occasion as this of declaring, that in truth there are three? Could we have supposed, that since the main argument for the Trinity, from the Old Testament, rests on the plural form of אלהים, which Dr. Wardlaw translates *Gods*, the Evangelist should have chosen to destroy this argument by using the singular noun Θεος, which all know it is impossible should be translated otherwise than simply GOD?

If it should be said, that there might be reasons why our Lord did not *publicly* teach this doctrine, should we not expect some account of his *private* communications of it to his *disciples*? Would they have preserved no record of their first knowledge of a truth so wonderful, and so essential a part of the Christian system? If we can suppose, that our Saviour himself forbore to teach publicly that, which was, in fact, the great principle on which his whole Gospel turned, why this reserve in his disciples? The Gospels were not written till several years after his death, and many of the Epistles still later, and should we have expected, that they would not have given a hint of

the time or the circumstances, when this stupendous truth was unfolded to them? Observe in the Acts, how minutely and fully the manner is declared, in which the doctrine of the extension of Christianity to the Gentiles was unfolded. And could we have thought, that the first revelation of the so much more difficult and so much more incredible doctrine of the Trinity, would not have occupied a single line of the sacred history? We are told so unimportant a thing as when the disciples were first called Christians. Would the time, when the worship of *one* object of adoration was exchanged for the worship of *three*, have been thought unworthy the passing notice of the recorders of our faith? If, for any reason, it was improper for the Apostles themselves, in all their different Epistles, to give a single example of ascription to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, would it have been too much to expect, that we should be informed, *when* such worship was first made lawful and *necessary* for other Christians?

But if all these expectations were groundless; if it were necessary, that such a doctrine, though it must be learned from Scripture alone, should yet never once be fully and plainly declared in the Scriptures; if we could suppose, that it would only be dropped incidentally, and be left to us to collect and put together, from a few fragments of discourse thinly scattered through the Sacred Volume; if we could suppose, that not only whole chapters, but whole books, should exist without the smallest allusion to that which is the key-stone of the whole Gospel; if all this were no more than was to be expected, still could we believe, that the New Testament should contain any thing *contradictory* to this doctrine? Could we have supposed, that there should be TWO HUNDRED AND FORTY PASSAGES in the New Testament, from which our Saviour's *subordination* to the Father may be deduced; and not less than FOUR HUNDRED AND FORTY PASSAGES, in which the Father is so mentioned as to lead to the conclusion, that he is exclusively the supreme God. We may easily account, on the Unitarian hypothesis, for many very strong and elevated epithets ascribed to our Saviour, a being so dignified in himself, so perfect in his character, so great in his office, and now so highly exalted by his God. But what account can be given of passages, which contain the most express and formal *contradiction* of the equality of Jesus with God? Or, if this, for any incon-

ceivable reason, was necessary, at least should we not expect, that the manner in which the contradiction was to be reconciled, would be explained or hinted at? If we were reasoning on any other subject, we should say, that one such passage as this, "My Father is greater than I," introduced with nothing to explain or limit it, would set aside a thousand mere *inferences* of *ours*, in favour of a doctrine which contradicts this truth. They who can believe, that, although it was the express design of St. John in his Gospel, to supply the deficiencies of the other Evangelists with regard to the Trinity,* he would yet set down, without a word of caution or comment, such passages as these, "I came from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of *him that sent me;*" "My doctrine is *not mine*, but his that sent me;" "The Father, which sent me, gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak;" "The Father, *that dwelleth in me*, he doeth the works;" "For THE FATHER IS GREATER THAN I;" "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, THE ONLY TRUE GOD, and Jesus Christ *whom thou hast sent;*"—they, I say, who can believe, that these and other similar passages, would be set down by a Trinitarian, in the act of proving his doctrine, with no word connected with them to restrain their natural import, ought at least to be more sparing of their charges on others of want of reverence for the Scriptures.

These expectations with regard to the kind and degree of evidence, which we might have expected to find in the New Testament, for the doctrine of the Trinity, are not only intrinsically reasonable, but conform to the analogy of the Scriptures themselves. The doctrine of *immortal life*, is, in some respects, under similar circumstances with that of the Trinity. Neither of them is expressly taught in the Old Testament; though it is thought that there are allusions to both. Moses, however, as he never taught the Hebrews, that there are more objects of worship than one, so he never employed a future life as the sanction of any of his laws. So far, there is an agreement in the circumstances of the two doctrines. In all other respects, that of the Trinity is by far the stronger case, and would

* This idea is maintained by Trinitarians, notwithstanding the Evangelist expressly tells us, "These things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus *is the Christ, the son of the living God*, and that believing ye might have life through his name."

seem to require a much fuller and clearer revelation. The doctrine of immortality is one, which, if not demonstrable from the light of nature alone, certainly has many most powerful arguments in its favour. Bishop Butler has finely shown, that there is nothing in the fact or circumstances of death, which furnishes any presumption against its truth. We know it also as a historical fact, that it was the belief of the great body of the Jewish nation at the time of our Saviour's advent. The Pharisees who embraced it were the ruling party. All these are circumstances which would seem to diminish the necessity of a very full, formal, and frequent recognition of the doctrine in the New Testament.

But how stands the fact? This doctrine, which is really a fundamental, is treated as such, throughout the New Testament. It shines every where in heaven's own light. It fell constantly from the lips of our Lord. It is asserted and reiterated by every one of his Apostles. It is interwoven into the whole texture of Christianity. If, then, such plenary proof is afforded to a doctrine, which reason, instinct, the tradition of the earliest antiquity, and every good feeling of the human heart, all dispose us to embrace, what evidence may we not justly expect for such a doctrine as the Trinity? The previous presumption is all *against* this opinion, as much as it is *in favour* of the doctrine of immortality. Up to this very day, its advocates have been unable fully and fairly to state it in any language, in which terms have a known and definite meaning, without involving an assertion of three Gods, or else an express and manifest contradiction. We have a right to expect, therefore, that this difficulty will be removed in the Scripture, and that all we are to believe on this subject, will there be expressed in plain and intelligible language. It is from this source alone, we are to remember, that we are to gather all our ideas on this subject. This high and awful mystery lies wholly within the province of revelation. How strong and clear, then, will be the light, which will be shed on it in the Sacred Volume, if it be indeed a truth, and especially a fundamental truth of Christianity! How much stronger and clearer, than that which is thrown on the doctrine of immortal life!

We have thus attempted to state some preliminary considerations, which ought to be kept in view by every one who is about to examine the New Testament, on the

subject of the Trinity. It is believed to be utterly impossible, that a man of a sound mind, who carries with him to the Scriptures just views of the evidence which this doctrine demands or may be expected to possess, can receive it as a part of the Gospel, especially as a truth essential to salvation.

To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.

SIR,

THE writer who has taken the trouble of replying to my letter to Dr. Wardlaw, seems to be a sort of sensible and candid gentleman; but as neither his sagacity nor candour has prevented him from misapprehending, and, by a natural consequence, misrepresenting me in one or two particulars, I feel it necessary to set him for once right, regarding these:—premising, that I will not again undertake the same office, however grossly or ludicrously he may henceforward misconceive me.

His objections to the letter, appear to be, that "it is written in a style the very reverse of Christian urbanity"—that it has nothing "of a tangible nature" in it—that it is "flimsy"—"inconsistent"—"contradictory"—"unmeaning." Of its "urbanity," I profess not to judge; and I can only say, that, if it evinces a want of charity, my words have belied my feelings. I trust the "Free Inquirer" may be able to say the same of those feelings which dictated his animadversions. That it is "flimsy" as to its argument, I readily admit, and may do so without shame, for it pretended not to argue;—that it is "inconsistent" or "contradictory," he has failed to prove;—that it is "unmeaning," is one of those misapprehensions on his part, which has occasioned the present letter. He charges me also, with "injustice," because I merely stated the *manner* of my conversion, without specifying those arguments and scriptural proofs in favour of Unitarianism, that have been so often published, and that are particularly developed in the controversy to which I alluded; and for this reason, he seems inclined to compare me to an "assassin," who "stabs his victim in the dark." "What," he exclaims, "would the friends of Unitarianism think of my fairness, were I to publish to the world, that, after having studied the history of Unitarianism and Trini-

tarianism, and the effects they produce on their respective votaries, I was confident the latter was much more conducive to virtuous conduct than the former—that, while Trinitarianism was the safeguard of genuine piety, many who had embraced Unitarianism, had THEREWITH *fallen into the most listless apathy on religious subjects, and, in very many instances, had become the victims of a cheerless and heart-withering infidelity?* Were I to make all this the object of a letter, without condescending upon argument and instances, to bear out my assertions, would you not, at once denounce me, an unfair and calumnious writer?" *And this, it seems, I am.* But the case which he here supposes, bears no analogy to mine; for, although I did not directly state the reasons of my faith (as this was not the object of my letter), yet, no one could possibly be at a loss to know the general grounds of a Unitarian's belief, especially as I referred to those volumes where they might be found distinctly stated. Let not the passage I have just quoted, however, be mistaken for a mere oratorical flourish, got up to place my delinquency in a strong and striking light. There is something more intended by it, which even Charity herself, "who thinketh no evil," could scarcely fail to perceive. The writer catches at an infamous aspersion, which has been again and again thrown upon Unitarians; and, not having the hardihood directly to own it, he drags it forward *by way of supposition*, and thereby furnishes the bigoted with a ready-made calumny, without involving himself, as he may imagine, in any responsibility! I cannot acquit him from this charge, on the plea of ignorance, for the slightest penetration must have anticipated the consequences upon the minds of the uninformed, of reviving such an aspersion, however unfounded.

His endeavour to prove my "inconsistency," is, as I think, a complete failure. Because I considered myself unqualified to enter into an examination (that is, of course, *as a writer*, for I was writing, not conversing) of the Scriptural passages by which Unitarianism and Trinitarianism are supposed to be respectively supported, how, he asks, could I "sympathise with Trinitarian brethren for being such?" Now, no fact is more undeniable, than that many a one may have a very clear and comprehensive knowledge of his Bible, or of any other subject, without being capable, *in a literary point of view*, of expressing

it; and I should have been properly chargeable with that vanity which the Free Inquirer is desirous of attaching to me, had I, like a great school-boy, run headlong into a subject which nothing but superior talents could do justice to, and which has already been done justice to by some of the master-spirits of the times. Was I, however, to do nothing, because I could not do much? Surely not. The humblest individual may do a little in the cause of truth: he who does nothing, is blameable; and he who pretends to do more than his talents warrant, is ridiculous.

The Free Inquirer next accuses me of "envious and unmanly" feeling, in my comparison of Mr. Yates and Dr. Wardlaw. This, as he has not proved, I may be permitted simply to deny. I do consider Mr. Y. superior to Dr. W. as a writer and a controversialist—and why not say so? They have both placed themselves in the public arena of disputation; and the public, if it speak of them at all connectively, *must* speak of them comparatively.

He then, by an unjust construction of my words, puts himself to the trouble of showing the unwarrantableness of inferring the weakness of a cause from its being defended. My words were,—"I judged from Dr. W.'s anxiety and fervour, that he had engaged in no ordinary battle—that he had the mighty intellect of many an honoured name to combat with,—and I UNCONSCIOUSLY inferred the weakness of his cause, from the defensive manner in which he conducted the warfare:"—the evident meaning of which is (taken in its connective and liberal sense), that, when I saw Dr. W. earnestly defending points before a congregation who had never doubted them—when I came to learn the objections of many an illustrious individual—I began to feel, *in spite of myself*, that his doctrines were not quite so tenable as I had formerly considered them. This meaning the Free Inquirer evades, by quoting only the last limb of the sentence, and referring that to the printed controversy, and not to the previously delivered lectures, and also, by dropping the word "*unconsciously*."

Of the remark of my acquaintance, regarding Dr. W. eating the blood of animals, he says, "it is utterly destitute of that importance which I would attach to it." I attached no importance to the remark, *of itself*, although I might consider it important in its consequences. As others, however, as well as the Free Inquirer, may have

misapprehended me on this point, I now regret having mentioned it.

I have gone over now, slightly, but I trust satisfactorily, the Free Inquirer's letter—a letter which would have been more consistent, had the inferences and epithets in which he has indulged respecting me, been less interwoven with great pretensions to liberality,—and it only remains to explain my motive in writing what I addressed to Dr. W., and thus vindicate it from the charge of its being "*unmeaning*," and myself from the imputation of personal vanity.

To every one, who, *in this country*, has embraced Unitarianism, it must naturally be, in a greater or less degree, matter, not of regret only, but of surprise and uneasiness, to observe how callous, and worse than callous, many around him are, to those Scriptural proofs and arguments in favour of his belief, which to him appear so clear and conclusive. If he be not given to inquire into the great cause of this, and if he be not stout-hearted enough to rely on his own opinion, the circumstances, that (what to him is all the world) kindred, friends, countrymen—many of whom he perhaps loves for their virtues, or admires for their talents—that they, all, are not only insensible to those views of the Bible, which he, after mature and anxious investigation, has adopted, but that they contemn, hoot, spurn them, as the vile blasphemy of a corrupted and perverted heart—that he stands comparatively alone in the midst of a society to which he is attached by nature, habits, and affection, and that he is characterised with a vulgar scorn, not by what he *is*, but by what he *professes* —that, if dependent upon his own exertions for his support, his *belief* interferes with his success in life, and his character, however irreproachable, is considered dangerous, and his company eschewed;—these circumstances, of themselves, are enough to oppress, at times, the mind of a Unitarian, and to lead him, in moments of dejection, to doubt, even with his Bible before him on which his faith is founded, the justice of his own conviction—to wonder that he cannot feel as others around him feel—and to lament, almost, that he cannot embrace the doctrines of his kindred and progenitors, which were instilled into his infant ears "with affectionate solicitude," and which are consecrated in his memory for ever, by the imperishable recollections of a father and a mother. How comes it,

he may ask, that I am thus vilified—myself and principles,—that even the slight merit of being conscientious in my belief, is not allowed me—and that, if I endeavour to state the grounds of my faith, I am, in almost every instance, heard with impatience, and replied to with acrimony and vituperation? The answer is obvious, and on the accuracy of it I rest my defence:—*There is a prejudice, a deep and bitter prejudice, in Scotland, against Unitarians and Unitarianism, upon which argument or reason can have no influence.* Under the impression of this fact—a fact, which the Free Inquirer has not adverted to, which he could not be ignorant of, and which he cannot controvert—I wrote the letter addressed to Dr. Wardlaw; and, while it was my endeavour to state, briefly and simply, the manner in which an individual, once as full of prejudice against Unitarians as any possibly could be, was led to think differently, to investigate the subject calmly, and finally to become one of that denomination which he formerly execrated,—it was my care to abstain from any thing that might give but a meagre view of the leading points in dispute, and tend only to kindle the fire of controversy; as it was my aim rather to induce the prejudiced to think dispassionately, than to furnish them with subject-matter of discussion: fully satisfied in the conviction, that those illiberal and contracted feelings under which they labour, must, in the first place, be removed, before the cause of free inquiry or impartial investigation can be a single step advanced.

If the Unitarian had nothing but reason to contend against—if he had not the charm of old associations from within, and the cry of rancorous prejudices from without —the view which the Free Inquirer has taken of the letter to Dr. W., might be justifiable; but it would be very destructive to the theological writings of his own church, if strictly acted upon. Let him divest the innumerable sermons and lectures, tracts, and meditations, that are daily issuing from the press, of their "fancy and feeling"—let him strip them of all opinions and assumptions that are not accompanied by "arguments and instances"—and he will commit more literary devastation than the barbarian of old, who burned the Alexandrine library with its 20,000 volumes. Had the letter contained the announcement of "the simple fact," that a member of the Unitarian Congregation, from the perusal

of Dr. Wardlaw's and Mr. Yates's volumes, and from the serious study of the Bible, had become a Trinitarian—there would, in that case, I apprehend, have been no complaint, that, "without a word of argument," its "whole scope" was "to proclaim the simple fact." There was no outcry of this sort raised, when Dr. Stock of Bristol, "by the test of fancy and feeling, and not by that of reason or argument," exhibited the almost miraculous circumstance, of a once professed Unitarian leaving that denomination for the Trinitarian! And the song of gratulation which then resounded through the land, was a proof of the uncommonness of that "simple fact." But a conversion from Trinitarianism to Unitarianism, though indeed in my case only a "simple fact," is, thanks to my Heavenly Father, not only not uncommon, but of frequent occurrence. And I have great cause for blessing the good Providence of God, when I look around me in the Unitarian Chapel of this city, in beholding not a few who were similarly circumstanced with myself in the days that are past, but are now also rejoicing believers in the all-holy, all-cheering, and all-benevolent doctrines of Christian Unitarianism.

A Unitarian is too generally supposed to be nothing more than a cold-hearted controversialist; and acting, perhaps, on this supposition, the Free Inquirer has apparently been surprised to find something not exactly in accordance with that opinion. There are times, surely, when the Unitarian, like other Christians, after having satisfied himself, by cool and candid investigation of the truth of his doctrines, may, without wrangling, indulge in those benign reflections which they are so admirably calculated to cherish—may doff his armour, so to speak, and repose himself in the naked security of a confiding faith.

I have done: and whatever the Free Inquirer may say, I will not again trouble you on the subject. He is desirous of commencing a controversy on the Trinitarian and Unitarian doctrines. For this I have neither inclination nor leisure, not to speak of any thing else; and I decline the contest with the most perfect indifference as to any inference he may be pleased to draw from my doing so, either to his own honour or my discredit. If it be with the *doctrines* of Unitarianism that he wishes to contend, and not with myself as an *individual*, he can be at no loss to know what they are, and how they are sup-

ported. Even in the number of the PIONEER itself, where he has thrown down his gauntlet so confidently, he may find enough to employ all his spare time and abilities. If he succeed in reconciling satisfactorily with the doctrine of the Trinity and the Deity of Christ, the few scriptural arguments given there, out of a hundred published at Boston—he will be more fortunate than any Trinitarian who has gone before him.

I am, SIR, yours very truly,

GLASGOW, Nov. 1826. AN OLD HEARER.

One Hundred Scriptural Arguments for the Unitarian Faith:—published in Boston, by the American Unitarian Association.

(Continued from page 104.)

18. Because an Apostle says of GOD, in distinction from the "Lord Jesus Christ," that HE is the "*only* Potentate," and that HE "*only* hath immortality."—1 Tim. vi. 15, 16.

19. Because the power which Christ possessed, was, as himself affirmed, *given* to him. "All power is *given* unto me," &c.—Mat. xxviii. 18.

20. Because he positively denies himself to be the author of his miraculous works, but refers them to the *Father*, or the holy spirit of God. "The *Father* that dwelleth in me, *he* doeth the works."—John xiv. 10. "If I cast out devils *by the spirit of God*," &c.—Mat. xii. 28.

21. Because he distinctly states, that these works bear witness, not to *his own power*, but that the *Father had sent him*.—John v. 36.

22. Because he expressly affirms, that the works were done, not in his own, but in his *Father's name*.—John x. 25.

23. Because he asserts, that "him hath God the *Father sealed;*" i. e. *to God the Father* he was indebted for his credentials.—John vi. 27.

24. Because he declares, that he is not the author of his own doctrine. "My doctrine is *not mine*, but his that sent me."—John vii. 16, 17.

25. Because he represents himself as having been *instructed by the Father*. "*As my Father hath taught me*, I speak these things."—John viii. 28.

26. Because he refers *invariably* to the *Father* as the *origin* of the *authority* by which he spoke and acted. "The Father hath *given* to the Son authority," &c.—John v. 26, 27.

27. Because he acknowledges his dependence on his heavenly Father, for example and direction in all his doings. "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do."—John v. 19. "The Father loveth the Son, and *showeth* him all things, that himself doeth."—John v. 20.

28. Because he denies, that he sought his own glory, but says, "*I honour my Father.*"—John viii. 49, 50.

29. Because he declares, "if I honour *myself,* my honour is nothing; it is *my Father* that honoureth me."—John viii. 54.

30. Because an Apostle declares, that in Christ dwelt all fulness, *because it so pleased the Father.*—Col. i. 19.

31. Because Christ is uniformly represented in the Scriptures, not as the *primary*, but the *intermediate*, cause of all things relating to our salvation. "*One God, the Father, of whom* are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, *by whom* are all things, and we *by him.*"—1 Cor. viii. 6.

32. Because he declares, "I am not come of myself," into the world, "for I proceeded forth and came from God."—John viii. 42, vii. 28. "Jesus knowing * * * that he *came from God* and *went to God,*" &c.—John xiii. 3.

33. Because he affirms, that he *had not the disposal* of the highest *places* in his own kingdom. "To sit on my right hand and on my left *is not mine to give.*"—Mat. xx. 23.

34. Because our Saviour, referring his disciples to a future time, when they would understand more accurately concerning him, expressly declares, that *then* they would know him to be *entirely dependent* upon the Father. "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, [i. e. crucified him] then shall ye know that I am he, [i. e. the Messiah] and that *I do nothing of myself;* but as my *Father hath taught me,* I speak these things."—John viii. 28.

35. Because our Saviour always professed to have *no will of his own;* but to be ever entirely *guided* and *governed* by the will of his heavenly Father. "For I came down from heaven, not to do *mine own will,* but the will of *him* that sent me."—John vi. 38.

(To be Continued.)

The Apocryphal Question.

(Continued from page 84.)

We have too much respect for the Sacred Records of Revelation to admit, that the Epithalamium of Solomon merits the title of Holy Scripture. "The words of the Lord are pure words." Is purity a characteristic of the Song of Songs? "The Scriptures are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness;" but does the bridal ode of Solomon inculcate a single moral precept, or a doctrine of religion? Let it be tried, and it will be found destitute of these sterling qualities, and will, therefore, be rejected by the chaste and unprejudiced mind, as a composition affecting the character, and counteracting the purifying influence, of Revelation. We do believe that the insertion of this work in the Sacred Canon, as "a work given by the inspiration of God, to be a rule of faith and life," has materially injured the reputation of the Bible, in the estimation of many undiscriminating Christians, and has put a weapon into the hands of unbelievers, which they have skilfully, and often successfully, used in attacking the faith of the unstable and unlearned. We do believe that the Song of Solomon has done incalculable injury to the cause of undefiled religion. Its spiritualization has insensibly sensualized the devotional feelings of enthusiastic minds. The excitement generated by this voluptuous work, is denominated the emotions of divine love, but terminates, not unfrequently, in criminal excesses; as love feasts, camp meetings, and holy fairs testify. Yet, the Song of Songs is, sometimes, selected as an appropriate work for the study of children at a Sunday school. Be the work Solomon's, or be it not, we hesitate not to pronounce it an irreligious production, the tendency of which is to contaminate the principles, and vitiate the morals. Its spiritualization may be compared to the canonization of some of the persons in the Romish calendar—saints who are a disgrace to human nature. How can those who circulate the Song of Solomon, as the pure Word of God, really feel alarmed at the tendency of the Apocryphal books? If the Song of Songs may be safely trusted to the hands of the young, as a book of inspiration, we can surely apprehend no injurious effects from the Apocrypha. But we are forgetting, that the serious charge against these *legal* books, is, that they in-

culcate the supreme efficacy of good works to procure the favour of God! Certainly, no one can accuse the Song of Songs of teaching the necessity of holiness, purity, and self-denial: from this heretical pravity, it is, most assuredly, exempt. But the Apocrypha stands convicted of declaring, that "the fear of the Lord is the first step to be accepted of him, and wisdom obtaineth his love; the knowledge of the commandments of the Lord, is the doctrine of life; and they that do things that please him, shall receive the fruit of the tree of immortality."—Eccles. xix. 18, 19.

This composition has occupied enough of our attention. Let us now proceed to the New Testament, and consider how the conduct of the members of the Edinburgh committee, in relation to it, corresponds with their professions of zeal for the dissemination of the pure Word of God. They express, in strong terms of reprobation, their disapproval of the practice of the London Committee, in circulating the Apocrypha with the Holy Bible. "These allies of the engineers of Satan," are accused of pious frauds, and of studied concealment; of doing evil that good may come; and various epithets of abuse, and many foul insinuations are employed against them. The blessing of God, we are told, cannot be asked, or expected, for a spurious Bible. The principles of this immaculate Edinburgh Committee, in reference to the measures which they have taken to circulate the Word of God, pure and undefiled, will appear from their works.* By their fruits we may judge of the sincerity of their professions.

It is well known, that our common translation of the New Testament, is, in many parts, extremely erroneous; and that it contains passages, and some of great importance, which are spurious. We mention a well-known fact, that the edition of the Greek Testament, from which our common version is made, is that published by the Elzevirs of Leyden, 1624, which rests on the authority of manuscripts principally of a modern date; and is found, in many important passages, to deviate from the manuscripts and

* We do not think it worth our while to enter into an examination of the use or abuse of the funds entrusted to their charge. An exposition has been made, not much to the credit of the immaculate conclave! It appears, that only a part of the money which is collected for Bibles, is expended for this object. We grant, that the Edinburgh statements cannot be printed gratis, though they are circulated gratis, but not gratis to the funds of the institution. School-books are not bought gratis, nor are all teachers paid gratis.

versions of the New Testament, in the greatest repute for antiquity and accuracy. "The text of this edition," says Dr. Marsh, bishop of Peterborough, in his notes on Michaelis, "is found in almost all that have been printed since that period. It has acquired, therefore, the title *Editio recepta* (the received edition), and the expression *textus ab omnibus receptus* (the text received by all), of which the editors boast in their preface, has been really prophetic. But that it deserves not the title of *textus perfectus* (a perfect text), is evident from the critical edition of Griesbach." "It follows," writes Dr. Gerard of Aberdeen, in his Institutes of Biblical Criticism, after some remarks on the editions of the Greek Testament, "that the readings found in all the printed editions of the New Testament, rest on the authority of a few manuscripts, not always the most ancient; and, consequently, the concurrence of these editions cannot confer great authority on the readings adopted by them, in opposition to others which appear to be well supported. That there are many various readings in the copies of the New Testament, and that it is highly useful to examine them, has, for a long time, been generally confessed; and they indeed supply the means of rendering the text of that part of Scripture in a very great degree correct."

We shall mention a few passages in which the received edition of the Greek Testament, from which our translation is made, is at variance with the most valuable manuscripts and versions. John i. 27, "Who was before me," is rejected by Griesbach. John v. 4, The account of the angel moving the water of the pool of Bethesda, is a very suspicious passage, and rejected by Marsh and Semler. John viii. 1–11, The story of the adulteress, is, indeed, kept by Griesbach in the text, but with great hesitation. Campbell of Aberdeen says, "these verses are wanting in a great number of manuscripts, many of the best critics and expositors, of opposite sects, have entertained strong suspicions of them; and there are some strong internal presumptions, as well as external, against the authenticity of the passage." Acts xx. 28, "To feed the church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood," Griesbach, on the authority of the best manuscripts and versions, reads "church of the Lord." The blood of God!—God is a spirit. Well may infidels sneer at the Scriptures, defiled with *pious* frauds, sanctioned by *the advocates of a*

pure circulation, who deal deceitfully with the Word of God, and who would rather that the enemies of the Lord should blaspheme, than that they should publicly acknowledge the rottenness of one of the great props of orthodoxy. The blood of God!!—Can we wonder that Deistical publications should be widely circulated? Ephesians iii. 9, "Was hidden in God, who hath created all things, by Jesus Christ." The latter clause, "by Jesus Christ," is left out of Griesbach's text, as an interpolation, unsupported by the most valuable manuscripts. 1 Tim. iii. 16, "God was manifest in the flesh." According to Griesbach's text, "He who," should be read instead of "God;" this is the reading best supported by manuscripts and versions. "All the old versions," says Dr. Clarke, "have who or which, and not God." 1 John iii. 16, "Perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us." The immortal God dying, is a position to stagger the faith of any one, who cannot swallow the doctrine of transubstantiation, and to arm against the Bible the common sense of every rational man, who receives this as a doctrine of revelation. But the Scriptures contain no doctrine at which reason revolts. The word "God" is here inserted on the authority of no Greek manuscripts, and is merely a conjectural interpolation. In the Latin versions, Dei, of God, is printed without any mark of doubt; but in many of the copies of the common English version, God is printed in Italics, to mark that it is unsupported by the original. But other Trinitarian publishers of the Bible, have boldly given to unwarranted conjecture the stamp of divine truth, by printing the word God in the common Roman character. Had Unitarians taken this unwarrantable liberty with the Sacred Scriptures, had they foisted into the sacred text, the fundamental article of their creed, that God is one person, they would have been assailed with every epithet of abuse; they would have been denounced as impious wretches, reserved for all the plagues that are written in the Book of Life. Yet, Trinitarians may, it appears, inculcate the grand article of their faith, by occasionally altering or foisting a word into the text of Scripture! Believing that Christ was God, and that God laid down his life, surely there is no harm done in making the Scriptures harmonize with these essential articles of their faith! Some of the fathers thought, that the Evangelists were too cautious, and timidly shrunk from the avowal of the

tremendous mystery, that God entered the womb, that God was suckled, and went through the years of childhood, that God was in an agony, and that God bled, and died, and was consigned to the tomb! The Apostles, they would have us believe, were afraid of shocking the prejudices of the Jews, who obstinately adhered to the doctrine of the Unity of God, and whose views of the spirituality of the divine nature, could not harmonize with the *elegant philosophy of the Alexandrine school.* The Jews, to whom Christianity was first preached, were so blind as not to perceive that one God makes three Gods, and three Gods make one God! Trinity in Unity was revolting to their simple understandings, and they rejected, with impious horror, the notion, that the immortal and spiritual God bled and died on the cross! Heathen converts were, however, more accommodating in their notions. They had been familiarized to deified men, and had learned from their priests, the saving act of prostrating their understandings! The Apostles, however had not invested any disciple with their mantle. The divine spirit with which they were actuated, withdrew its visible operations. And they had left unrecorded, the great mysteries of the Christian faith, or, at least, hinted them so obscurely, that the majority of Christians, would, in all probability, die ignorant of those doctrines, the belief of which is essential to salvation! Influenced by these *pious* regards for the souls of heretics, some zealous Trinitarian *considerately and mercifully* supplied the deficiencies of the Apostolic writings, and inserted a few words, and altered others, to make the Scriptures accord with the doctrines of the church! With this *charitable* intention, the *pious* frauds we have mentioned, have been committed, and that celebrated prop of the Trinity, 1 John v. 7, was artfully introduced, "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." It is now acknowledged to be a forgery. Griesbach, Porson, Bishop Tomline, and almost every learned and competent critic, reject the verse. It is not found in any Greek manuscript of earlier date than the 15th century. It was omitted by Luther in his German version, and in the old English Bibles of Henry VIII. Edward VI. and Elizabeth. The imposture was printed in humble characters, and with diffident pretensions, being printed in smaller types than the accompanying verses,

and being also included in brackets. Trinitarianism, however, required the aid of stronger biblical evidence than the baptismal form, Mat. xxviii. 19. This forgery, was, therefore, pressed into the service of orthodoxy, and of course the pious fraud was concealed by the removal of every mark of suspicion. In our common version, the spurious passage appears as part of the pure Word of God, and, as we might expect, is the first text adduced in the Confession of Faith, to prove, "that in the Unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost:" a text worthy of the doctrine it is urged to substantiate. This forgery, which is the bulwark of Trinitarianism, is published for the pure Word of God, by the Edinburgh Committee, who *express* so much solicitude for the dissemination of the unadulterated Scriptures. This Committee, who storm at the Parent Society, for circulating the Apocrypha with the Bible, who declaim in violent terms against the sin of speaking deceitfully for God, who avow that they are actuated in their separation from the British and Foreign Bible Society, solely by the purest motives, an earnest regard for the circulation of the Word of God undefiled; these abominators of Apocryphal practices; these lovers of the truth, the pure truth, and nothing but the truth; who wish to promote the glory, by spreading the pure Word of God; who dare not speak deceitfully for him; who have learned that the wisdom which cometh from above is first *pure;* who cannot participate in the use of means which they know to be unlawful, nor give countenance to those who employ them; who know that the Almighty neither needs, nor requires, nor will accept of such services, in the accomplishment of his gracious plans; this immaculate Committee, all purity and perfection, seeming to think, that "by their words only they shall be justified, or by their words be condemned," are themselves convicted of being guilty of Apocryphal practices; they circulate as the pure Word of God, spurious passages of a most important tendency, in which doctrines of a tremendous nature are involved, doctrines represented as essential to salvation. They know, that 1 John v. 7, the pillar of orthodoxy, is abandoned by almost all learned Protestant critics; they know that this testimony to their favourite doctrine, is a base forgery; they know, that it speaks deceitfully for God, for Jesus, and the Holy

Spirit; they know, that the unlearned perpetually refer to it, in support of the great article of their faith, and that even clergymen, presuming on the ignorance of their audiences, quote the passage to bolster up the doctrine of the Trinity. In what terms shall we describe the disingenuousness of this imposition on the credulity and ignorance of mankind? We might heap coals of fire on their heads, if we were to recriminate in the strong terms which they themselves use. But out of their own mouths they stand condemned. They themselves virtually violate the integrity of Scripture, and are, in fact, considering their knowledge and professions, little less criminal than the impious man who presumes to corrupt the Word of God.

(To be continued.)

THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

GLASGOW, *December* 9, 1826.

FOR some time past, a monthly Lecture has been delivered at Carluke, by the Rev. George Harris. Considerable attention appears to have been excited by the services. The most strange and random assertions have been made by the leaders of orthodoxy, respecting the opinions and conduct of the Unitarians. Not only have the common charges been reiterated, but warnings have been held forth to the people, not to listen to Socinian preachings, lest God, out of his wrath, should allow them to become Socinians also, as a punishment for their temerity! The sentiments of the living have been grossly misrepresented, the memory of the dead has been foully assailed. The works of Andrew Fuller have furnished the one, and Archbishop Magee's writings have been the prolific storehouse of the other. Not satisfied, however, with the vituperation so profusely lavished on Christian Unitarianism, and the writings and characters of its advocates, by these mitred and unmitred brethren, the inhabitants of Carluke have also been told, that the man who was convinced of the truth of Trinitarianism, and yet went to hear a Socinian preach, was as guilty, in the sight of God, as him who imbrues his hand in his brother's blood! The want of the spirit of Christ, manifested in such railing accusations, was too palpable to be mistaken even by persons unaccustomed

to religious inquiry. Its effect was, to induce people to hear, rather than to violate justice, by condemning without investigation. Discourses, in reply to these hard sayings, were delivered by Mr. Harris, and the audiences were considerably increased; on some occasions the school-room being too small to accommodate those who wished to judge righteous judgment. In October, a Society was formed in Carluke, of Christian Unitarians; and, on the 12th November, Mr. Harris commenced the Sabbath Worship of the Carluke Congregation. In the morning, Mr. H. dwelt on the necessity and duty of an open and fearless profession of Christian truth, accompanied by a righteous and holy practice; in the afternoon, the common doctrine of Election was compared with reason and Scripture, and shown to be opposed to both; and, in the evening, the attention of the audience was directed to those who are justly entitled to bear the Christian name and character. About eighty persons were present in the morning, double that number in the afternoon, and, in the evening, the place was crowded to excess, numbers standing at the windows outside the building. Regular Sabbath-day worship will, in future, be conducted, once a-fortnight by the Members of the Congregation, and on the alternate Sabbaths, by the English Students of the University of Glasgow.

A Missionary Society has been formed at Glasgow, by the Unitarian Students of the University, for the purpose of preaching, wherever suitable places can be found, and also, for distributing moral and religious tracts at the different stations. In addition to Carluke, the following Students have commenced a Course of Lectures, to be delivered every Sabbath Evening, at Paisley;—Messrs. James Esdaile, John Esdaile, Hawkes, Jenkins, Bowles, and D. Evans; on the Trinity, Messiahship of Jesus, Defence of Unitarianism, Isaiah ix. 6, the Unity of God, the two natures of Christ, on Creeds, Universal Restoration, Christian Faith, Difference between Unitarianism and Deism, the Atonement, Original Sin, the Writer of the Hebrews a Unitarian, and on Free Inquiry.

We are glad to learn, that the Rev. W. J. Bakewell of Edinburgh, is delivering, once a-fortnight, on Sabbath afternoons, a series of discourses on Ecclesiastical History; and that, early in January, he will commence a course of

Sabbath Evening Lectures, on the doctrines of Unitarianism. We think it highly creditable to the members of the Edinburgh Church, and speaks well, also, for the liberality of the English Unitarians, that the Unitarian Chapel in Edinburgh, built in 1823, is now entirely free from debt. May the Congregation increase and prosper.

A Course of fifteen Sabbath evening Lectures, was commenced by the Rev. George Harris, in the Unitarian Chapel of this City, on the 19th of November. Our distant readers will be happy to hear, that the three lectures already delivered, have been attended by overflowing audiences. The aisles, the vestries, every spot in which a human being could stand, have been filled, and hundreds, notwithstanding, have been obliged to go away every night unable to obtain admission. At the conclusion of the Lecture, tracts are lent out to read to any person choosing to apply, free of expense.

Our readers will be gratified in being informed, that the Rev. J. Wright of this City, who accepted the situation of Minister to the Unitarian Congregation of Alnwick, in May last, is indefatigable in his exertions to spread abroad a knowledge of the truth, as it is in Jesus. His labours have already been successful, the sittings let in the Chapel being nearly doubled. Since July, he has been lecturing every Sabbath evening, on Christian doctrine; and the audiences have now become so numerous, as to induce him to preach also on the Thursday evenings. We heartily wish that this Congregation, most of whose members were, a few years since, of the Methodist persuasion, could be relieved of the burden of debt still remaining on the Chapel. It is a case richly meriting public liberality.

In our Number for October, we gave a very brief sketch of the proceedings of the General Synod of Ulster, at its meeting in June last. We are glad to remark, that, in stating, that "the farther consideration of subscription to the Confession of Faith was postponed to the next year," our information was incorrect, as the motion for subscription was decided at that meeting in the *negative*. We have sincere pleasure, in directing the attention of our readers to the following letter and observations, for which we cheerfully acknowledge ourselves debtor to "The Christian Moderator" for October.

"The Rev. James Carlile, of Dublin, opened the Synod by preaching from Phil. i. 27. Time does not allow me to give you any thing like an account of this truly excellent discourse. It electrified the audience. Never were the great principles of civil and religious liberty more powerfully supported. The injustice and impolicy of all political restrictions on account of religious belief, and not merely the inutility, but the pernicious tendency of compulsory subscription to human articles of faith, were demonstrated in a manner which carried conviction to every bosom which was not barred by bigotry and prejudice. The Sermon was a very long one, but this circumstance was utterly unperceived. The sentiments delivered, were admirably adapted to the present state of the Synod. Some Ministers of our body, in order to accomplish their own selfish purposes by getting themselves recognised as leaders of a party, have for a few years past, eagerly embraced every opportunity of exciting jealousy and dissension. The Presbytery of Antrim was by them stigmatized as heretical. The Belfast Institution was to be put down on account of the liberality of principle on which it is established: and every man who would not subscribe that precious compend of Calvinistic bigotry, the Westminster Confession, was denounced as an infidel, and assailed by vulgar clamour and calumny. These fomenters of mischief quailed under the energy of Mr. Carlile's arguments. Many of their followers perceived the delusion which had been practised on them. The tone and temper of the Synod was instantaneously changed. Kind and liberal feelings were restored; and the great majority of the body were induced to arrange themselves under the banner of Christian charity. Mr. Carlile is a Calvinist; and in some sentiments advanced by him, of course, I could not concur. But these things are mere trifles, when compared with the great principles which he so ably vindicated. The circumstance of Mr. Carlile being a Calvinist, gave additional weight to every thing he said. Had a *New Light* member of the Synod advanced the same arguments, they would have had very little weight. There has been for many years past, a kind of understanding, that the Synod, in its collective capacity, shall not request any Moderator to publish his opening sermon; and it was entirely owing to this cause, that such a request was not made to Mr. C. from the chair. But so deep was the impression effected

by his discourse, that a paper was circulated, containing an entreaty that he would give it to the world; and upwards of 900 copies were subscribed for *in the course of a single day*. This fact shows that the Irish Presbyterians are favourable to Catholic Emancipation, though a late Moderator asserted the reverse. It gives me great satisfaction to say, that Mr. Carlile has assented to the application."

And it gives us great pleasure to find, that he has fulfilled his engagement. The remarks contained in the foregoing extract, as to the effect of Mr. Carlile's discourse on his immediate audience, are fully justified by the proceedings of the body, recorded in their printed minutes. In every question of importance brought before the Meeting, liberality has triumphed. The scandalous overtures of 1825, with respect to the Belfast Institution, have been consigned to oblivion, and virtually repealed. The renewed attempt of the fanatical party to enforce subscription to some human standard of orthodoxy, has been defeated. The Synod is once more what it was, and what every ecclesiastical assembly ought to be, an association of *brethren*.

We are sincere friends to Catholic Emancipation, because we think that no human being, whatever may be his sentiments on the subject of religion, should be deprived of his civil rights. And though all the good might not result from the emancipation of the Catholics from civil thraldom, which some of its zealous advocates anticipate, yet it would elevate the Catholics from the degraded *caste* which now depresses them—it would give them additional motives to rise in the scale of intellect—and it would probably induce many, seriously to inquire into the foundation of that faith, to which now, were it merely from feelings of honour as belonging to a persecuted sect, they tenaciously adhere. Brand a man as a criminal, and too usually he will become that which you stigmatize him with being. Remove the disability, and he has then an incentive to excellence, a stimulus to virtue and to knowledge.

Our pleasure on perusing the following letter from the venerable Bishop of Norwich to the Catholic Archbishop of Tuam, will, we trust, be shared by our readers. It is a reply to one from the Archbishop, requesting the Bishop of Norwich to present the Catholic Petition, and assuring him of their "most sincere and unreserved confidence." It is to us delightful to see the Catholic and

the Protestant thus reciprocating kind and generous and Christian feelings. It is, we think, a pledge of what would more generally be witnessed, were the Catholics relieved from the chain which galls them.

"My Dear Lord,—The Catholic inhabitants of Tuam and the Union, do me but justice in thinking, that there is not a single individual in the United Kingdom, more cordially attached to the great cause of civil and religious liberty than myself, or who contemplates with more surprise and sorrow, the impolicy, the injustice, and the want of Christian charity, by which so many loyal subjects and conscientious Christians, are deprived of those civil privileges, to which they have, in my opinion, an unquestionable right, for no other reason, which I am able to find out, than their steady attachment to the religion of their ancestors. Old as I am, I will gladly present to the House of Lords, the Petition mentioned by your Grace; and I shall be happy to have an opportunity of bearing my humble testimony in favour of the most injured people upon the face of the earth. Believe me, Sir, with great truth, your affectionate brother,

Norwich, Oct. 9, 1826. Henry Norwich."

The Glasgow Auxiliary Bible Society, held its 14th Annual Meeting, on the 16th November; an immense concourse of people attended, and had the Trades' Hall been much larger, it would, no doubt, have been crowded. It had been previously known, that, at this meeting, the question would be decided, as to the longer connection of this Auxiliary with the Parent Institution. The Report of the Committee, advocating a separation in consequence of Apocryphal circulation, and especially the employment and countenance given to "the semi-infidels" of the Continent, was read by the Rev. John Smyth of St. George's. Separation was also supported by the Reverends Hugh Heugh, Patrick M'Farlane, Michael Willis, John Muir, and Mr. James Duncan. The Rev. Dr. Wardlaw proposed, that the consideration of the question of separation, should be postponed till after the Annual Meeting of the Parent Society in May next. This counter resolution was advocated by Mr. W. M'Gavin, and the Reverends Dr. Ewing, Robert Brodie, Dr. Dick, Dr. Mitchell, and William Kidston. Great claims to liberality and Christian charity were made by the separatists, but Dr. Wardlaw

and those who voted with him, proved, by their manners and conduct, that they were its possessors. Truly it was needful, that those who were for condemnation, without waiting for the defence of the accused; that those who would not be satisfied with pledges given by gentlemen and Christians, excepting certain members of the Committee were also turned out of office; that those who would not believe that the Parent Institution would adhere to their solemn resolutions of May last, because they had not at the same time passed a specific vote of censure on their own previous conduct, in sending out the Apocrypha with the Bible; that those, who, if all these things had been done according to their wishes, would still have voted for separation, unless the British and Foreign Bible Society had dissolved its connection with the present conductors of the Bible Societies on the Continent, and appointed "Christian" agents; it was, indeed, very necessary, that such men should lay claim to liberality of feeling and Christian benevolence, otherwise an uninitiated individual might have been led to conclude, that spiritual pride, and papal intolerance, and pharisaical bigotry, had been the proper characteristics of the parties concerned. We quite agree with Lord Bexley in his speech at Maidstone, in reference to the statements made respecting the conductors of Bible Societies abroad, that "he who can believe them, can believe any absurdity, however gross." As an instance, we would adduce what we cannot but characterize as the abominable statement, made respecting the Strasburgh Preface, and its truly Christian author, Professor Haffner. Charges of the most gross kind have been adduced against him; they have been repeated parrot-like by every advocate for separation; and the "Christians" of the land, have shuddered with pious horror at the bare mention of the "Infidel Preface." *It is not an Infidel Preface.* The Strasburgh Committee, originally, meant to have prefixed it to an edition of the Bible they were about to publish, but from its length they omitted it. It was published separately. There needed no remonstrance from Britain, to prevent its issuing with the Bible, for the attempt was never made. We thought, from the commencement of this Apocryphal battle, that there was something more than met the eye, in the excessive sensibility of the impugners of the Parent Society, respecting the non-circulation of the pure Word of God, and we ven-

tured to suggest as much in our first number. We are now satisfied, that the main reason for this war of words, has been, that Unitarians and Rationalists have stood in the way of the measures, taken to diffuse "evangelical" sentiments in foreign countries. These "engineers of Satan" have been the lion in the path; and the Apocrypha has been a most convenient handle wherewith to combat them. What ought the religious public, what will every man of good sense and honesty think, of those who could style that an Infidel Preface, which thus concludes, as does the Strasburgh? Professor Haffner, in the pure spirit of ardent devotion to the cause of Bible Christianity, asks his countrymen, "At what fountain can they better quench the thirst of the spirit, and the heart, longing for truth and consolation? Yes, he who knows his Bible, who knows the divine instructions there contained, who apprehends them in their purity and brightness, and who, in faith, has received them into his soul, he no longer turns aside from it; he is more and more inwardly satisfied, that it is from God; he daily enjoys its evidence by its beneficial influence, an influence which whosoever experiences, will unite with heart and mouth in the exclamation of Peter, 'Lord whither should we go away? Thou alone hast the words of eternal life.'"

It is easy for men rolling in wealth, to profess themselves believers in Christianity—it is pleasant enough, when riding on the topmost wave of popularity, to display the Christian banner,—but to endure to the end—to be faithful even unto the death—for the soul to quail not in its love of Christ and its devotion to Christian truth, even in the hourly expectation of being beheaded,—these are the things that try the faith, and prove the character to be sterling, and manifest the integrity of a man's heart. Through such a trial, the basely calumniated Haffner has passed—he was thus faithful proved amidst the faithless—the prison of Robespierre had no terrors for his breast, for he knew in whom he believed. When Mr. Haldane and Dr. Andrew Thomson have given as strong manifestations of their love to Christ, of their belief in Christianity, then may they talk of their adherence to the truth, and boast themselves to be somewhat. But to witness these men bringing their railing accusations against Haffner, and to hear their cry repeated by their deluded votaries, rouses the best feelings of man's nature against the heartless and

unfounded affirmations which have been received, alas! as if they were the dictates of Heaven's Oracles.

We think, that the argument was with Dr. Wardlaw and his friends at this meeting: we are sure, that impartial justice, gentlemanly conduct, and Christian feeling, were; but the vote, after five hours tedious discussion, was not. The majority, and a large one it was, decided against hearing the defence of the Bible Society—against allowing their brethren a few months to manifest their repentance—they decided for bigotry, and against charity!

We would fain hope, that the spirit and conduct exhibited at this memorable meeting, may be an instructive lesson, especially to the minority. The "savage ferocity," to use the words of one of the Rev. speakers on that occasion, with which the motives and conduct of truly honourable, most praiseworthy, and indefatigable labourers in the cause of the Bible Society have been assailed, during this Apocryphal controversy, is truly disgusting to every liberal understanding. No cause can be ultimately advanced by such unhallowed means. Nor, with all their loud pretensions to superior holiness, and superior love of God's pure Word, do we think that the infidels of the Continent have done a thousandth part of the harm to the cause of divine truth, as those who, perpetually exclaiming "the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we;" yet prove, by the language they have employed in this controversy, that they are totally destitute of the spirit of Jesus Christ. And though we gladly testify, that the Statement of the Glasgow Committee, is more free from "savage ferocity" of spirit, than some other publications on the subject, yet we cannot acquit them of misrepresentation and bigotry. They, too, talk about "virtual infidelity," "semi-infidel churches," and "infidel auxiliaries," and ask, "What Christian would commit the sacred text to be revised or translated by a Socinian or an Infidel?" and, in the same spirit of intolerance, one of the advocates of separation, at the late meeting, declared, respecting the professed Christian churches of the Continent, that if we wished them God speed, "we are in some measure partakers of their damnation!" We marvel much, that persons holding in such detestation the principles of Christian Unitarianism, could find no other words in which to express their love and veneration for the Bible, so well fitted to embody their feelings, as the words of a Unitarian. In the

2d resolution of the Glasgow Committee, passed on the 16th March last, they take the words of John Locke respecting the Bible:—that Book alone, "which has God for its Author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter;" and they take these words, too, "without note or comment!" "Is Saul also amongst the Prophets?" We hope, too, that Mr. M'Gavin may have gained a lesson of liberality, from the castigation he has received from "the Christian Instructor;" for though, if it be a "Christian Instructor," it must be in another gospel than that of Jesus, yet we may occasionally learn something even from an enemy; and most assuredly, the author of "the Protestant," has no just ground of complaint, that the measure of illiberality which he heaped up, and distributed so copiously into the bosom of his Catholic brother, should be now returned into his own, "good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over," by his Established opponent in Edinburgh.

Rather a curious exhibition was made at this meeting, by one of the separatists, Mr. James Duncan, who read a letter, purporting to be, as we understood, from one of the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, averring, that, since the Annual Meeting in May last, the Bible Society, had, in violation of their own resolutions, been sending forth Apocryphal Bibles to some of the foreign societies. The statement produced a powerful and very visible effect on the meeting; but when called on to give the author of the statement, Mr. D. declined, as it was, he said, a confidential communication. It was characterised by a speaker, as an anonymous slander, and Mr. D. apologised for having read the letter there. We observe, however, by a letter from Mr. D. inserted in the newspapers, that he has since written to his friend, and obtained his "permission to show the letter," and is "authorised to do so, to any of the members of the Committee of the late Auxiliary Society, who may choose to call." Now, as the letter was produced at a public meeting, as it was read in order to sway the determination of that meeting, and as it manifestly made a deep impression, why this reservation as to its being shown only to "the Committee?" Had it been read at a Committee meeting merely, there might have been propriety in the restriction, but as it was publicly read, if it merit the character of "innocency with her open face," the name of the assertor should have been made as public.

It seems, however, according to this letter, that the Bible Society have been circulating "Apocryphal additions to the Psalms and to the Book of Job." What these are, we are not informed. But can Mr. Duncan prove, that the two first chapters, and from the 7th verse in the last chapter, to the conclusion, are not prose additions made to the original fragment of the poem of Job? Before he talks of "Apocryphal additions" "to the book of Job," let him inquire into this matter.

We would also put it to this advocate of pure Bible circulation, this holder up of the misdeeds of the Committee of the Parent Society, this doubter of the validity of the resolutions of the Annual Meeting of May last, what he would think of persons publishing a Greek Testament, professing to be after the revision of certain individuals, and yet found, on examination, to agree with their edition only in trifling and unimportant particulars, but in every question of moment, to be as different as light from darkness? We ask Mr. Duncan, whether he knows of no Greek Testament, purporting to be "curam Leusdenii et Griesbachii," of which the title ought, in truth, to be, "An edition of the Greek Testament, in which Griesbach is followed in all readings of no importance, and disdainfully rejected where his alterations might be supposed to diminish the evidence for the doctrine of the Trinity, the Deity of Christ, or the Incarnation?" The separatists accuse the Bible Society, of unworthy artifice, "as evincing a culpable deficiency in the virtues of simplicity and godly sincerity;" let Mr. D. then say, what epithets they would deserve, who should pass off a Greek Testament, under the sanction of the name of one, whose material readings were all omitted? And if he needs any helps to forming his judgment on the matter, we refer him to no book or letter, which only the members of a Committee are permitted to inspect, but would suggest, that he should take a look at the Greek Testament, "curam Leusdenii et Griesbachii," printed by A. & J. Duncan, "E Prelo Academico," and sold by A. & J. M. Duncan, Glasgow!

COMMUNICATIONS have been received from Philo-Veritas (postage not paid, and therefore cannot be inserted), R. C., Inquisitor, and P.

COMMUNICATIONS for THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER, are requested to be addressed (Post paid) to the Editor, care of Messrs. HEDDERWICK & SON, Printers, Glasgow.

THE

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On the Canon of Scripture.

THE question that has been lately agitated about the Apocrypha, has very naturally led many to ask, "Upon what authority does our received Canon of Scripture rest?" If we will be candid, we shall see, that it rests on no better grounds, than what the Continental nations have for their peculiar views, *viz.* the undisturbed opinion of their fathers. It is not a question which, since the period of the Reformation, has undergone any public scrutiny or decision. The Protestants took up the matter as they found it. They were content to rest their doctrines on the *acknowledged* Volume of Scripture, in opposition to the authority of the church, or to the decision of its doctors and rulers in any period *after* the age of the Apostles. This was sufficient for the ends they had in view. I do not mean, that they purposely stopped at this stage, from any motives of policy. It was a question which did not occur to them. Their circumstances did not call for it. But that is not to hinder us from making the inquiry, and we have the very same reason to do it, that the opponents of the Apocrypha have for their conduct. Granting that there may be little, or even that there is nothing, which is absolutely false or evil in the received collection, yet it remains a very weighty matter, that any thing should pass under the name of the Word of God, which really is not *His* Word.

We have justly such a reverence for the Divine Word, that we attach great importance not only to the general scope of its doctrine, but we dwell on the import of every word and phrase, as pregnant with some important meaning. Perhaps we carry this even too far: but be that as it may, it is manifest, that if we invest any merely human composition, however excellent it may be, with this attribute, we open a source of endless and unnecessary controversies, which, by occupying the attention of mankind, make us forget what it was, which God had alone in view, in his proper communications to the world.

This practice has been, in all ages, the great source of corruptions in religion. It is not so much the omission or denial of original facts or truths in the received doctrines of any church, that is the source of practical errors, as it has been the *addition* of unauthorised matter, by which, like, as by the traditions of the Jewish Pharisees, "the Word of God is made of none effect." It becomes us, therefore, to take good heed, that we have not laid the foundation of such extraneous matter in our religion, by ascribing the weight and importance of inspired words, to compositions merely human. If it turns out, that we have been in the habit of doing so, there is no wonder that we have had so many controversies; and they must be interminable, till we revert to the first principles and sole authority on which religious truth can stand and be maintained—the pure Word of God.

This subject, I think, may be best investigated and adjusted, by proceeding, in the first instance, to ascertain what parts of the Bible are more pre-eminently important, and unquestionably inspired. We shall then inquire, what parts of it are of a mixed or doubtful character—I mean in regard to positive *inspiration*, and not in regard to utility and truth, as determined by human judgment and knowledge. And, in the third place, we shall see if there are not some parts, which are manifestly and merely human compositions, and resting upon human authorities. There may be some difficulty in drawing these lines of distinction accurately, but I think it may be proved to a demonstration, that such a difference exists among the different books contained in the Bible, and that the character of several of them, can be referred, in the clearest manner, to these different classifications.

Previous to entering into our investigation, it may be useful to advert to certain popular prejudices, or objections. It is said in Paul's Epistle to Timothy, that *all* Scripture is given by inspiration of God; and many people infer, that this is a testimony to the entire authority of the Bible as we now have it. But it is certain that Paul could have no such idea in view. Many parts of the New Testament, and particularly all the books of the Apostle John, were not then written; his own Epistles were only known to the particular churches and neighbourhood to which they were addressed, and, unquestionably, were not collected together and circulated through-

out all the churches, as they are now. It is impossible, therefore, that he could intend to sanction our present collection, by the remark above quoted.

He could only have in view the *sacred* writings of the Old Testament, in which "Timothy had been instructed from his *youth*." But even as to that collection of Books commonly received by the Jews, he is giving *it* no formal sanction, as an entire or unmixed collection of holy or sacred writings. There was no question about that point between the Apostle and Timothy, or any of the Jewish converts. The Jews believed that their Bible contained *all* the *sacred* writings then extant; but as to whether it contained any thing more or less, than had been ever inspired, that was a totally different matter. It may be granted, that Paul and Timothy, like other Jews, did probably receive the common opinion, without inquiry, concerning *their* Bible, as the Protestants did, without inquiry, concerning *our* Bible, at the Reformation; but Paul is giving no deliberate sanction to that opinion, as a matter of any controversy. He only says, "that the *holy* or *sacred* Scriptures (wherever they are to be found or whatever they consist of) are able to make men wise unto salvation," and the reason he assigns for it, is, that they (such *sacred* Scriptures) "are given by *inspiration*." Besides, it has been justly observed, that the passage in question, might be as well read, and would more clearly express the sentiment intended to be conveyed, in the following manner—"all Scripture given by inspiration, is profitable, &c." The word *is*, inserted before *given*, in our common translation, every person may observe, is printed in italics, to indicate that it is a supplementary word, inserted at the discretion of the translators, on which, therefore, no stress can be laid, and without which, the common opinion cannot be supported.

Another supposed confirmation of the Bible, as a collection of Sacred Writings, is drawn from the passage at the end of the Revelation, in which a curse is denounced against all persons "who shall either add, or take from, the contents of this book." This sentence appearing to be the conclusion of the volume of Scripture, as we now have it arranged and bound up, many unlearned people, imagine it has a reference to the whole collection; and others who know better, are at no pains to explain such mistakes. But it refers to nothing but the book of the

Revelation itself; and the decisive proof of this, is, that for about a century after its publication, it was circulated *by itself*, and not admitted into the Canon of Scripture generally received among the primitive Christians. They had their doubts, and some of them their express objections, against this book, as well as some others now received into the Canon. How these doubts came to be satisfied, and when, or by whom, the Canon of Scripture was completed, is not known as a historical fact; although some conjectures may be formed concerning it, of which we shall afterwards speak. But it was not before the end of the second century, at soonest. Indeed, the proof of the accuracy of the Canon, depends entirely upon its internal evidence, and not upon any public authority. This must appear to be the case, at least to the view of every well informed Protestant; for, as to the Church of Rome, it has a way of settling the point consistently enough with its own pretensions. The Church is asserted to be infallible, as a body; and, consequently, this body, through the organ of the Pope as its head, or a general council as its representative, may determine the question, under the unerring direction of the Holy Spirit! But even this official declaration was not made till a very late period, when Protestants will not allow the Church of Rome to have possessed the slightest claim to such inspiration and infallibility.

I may conclude this preliminary paper, therefore, by saying, that the question is perfectly open to our investigation, and may be determined in the present day just as well, and indeed with a much better chance of accuracy, than it was ever done formerly, for reasons which shall be shown.

INQUISITOR.

Milton's Treatise on Christian Doctrine.

(Continued from page 96.)

WE now leave the writings of Milton, to offer a few remarks on his *moral* qualities. His moral character was as strongly marked as his intellectual, and it may be expressed in one word, *magnanimity*. It was in harmony with his poetry. He had a passionate love of the higher, more commanding, and majestic virtues, and fed his youthful mind with meditations on the perfection of a human being. In a letter written to an Italian friend

before his thirtieth year, and translated by Hayley, we have this vivid picture of his aspirations after virtue.

"As to other points, what God may have determined for me, I know not; but this I know, that if he ever instilled an intense love of moral beauty into the breast of any man, he has instilled it into mine. Ceres, in the fable, pursued not her daughter with a greater keenness of inquiry, than I day and night the idea of perfection. Hence, wherever I find a man despising the false estimates of the vulgar, and daring to aspire in sentiment, language, and conduct, to what the highest wisdom, through every age, has taught us as most excellent, to him I unite myself by a sort of necessary attachment; and if I am so influenced by nature or destiny, that by no exertion or labours of my own I may exalt myself to this summit of worth and honour, yet no powers of heaven or earth will hinder me from looking with reverence and affection upon those, who have thoroughly attained this glory, or appeared engaged in the successful pursuit of it."

His Comus was written in his twenty-sixth year, and on reading this exquisite work, our admiration is awakened, not so much by observing how the whole spirit of poetry had descended on him at that early age, as by witnessing, how his whole youthful soul was penetrated, awed, and lifted up by the austere charms, "the radiant light," the invincible power, the celestial peace of saintly virtue. He reverenced moral purity and elevation, not only for its own sake, but as the inspirer of intellect, and especially of the higher efforts of poetry. In his usual noble style, he says,

"I was confirmed in this opinion, that he who would not be frustrate of his hope to write well hereafter in laudable things, ought himself to be a true poem; that is, a composition and pattern of the best and honourablest things; not presuming to sing of high praises of heroic men, or famous cities, unless he have in himself the experience and the practice of all that which is praiseworthy." Vol. I. p. 224.

We learn from his works, that he used his multifarious reading, to build up within himself this reverence for virtue. Ancient history, the sublime musings of Plato, and the heroic self-abandonment of chivalry, joined their influences with prophets and apostles, in binding him "everlastingly in willing homage" to the great, the honourable,

and the lovely in character. A remarkable passage to this effect, we quote from his account of his youth.

"I betook me among those lofty fables and romances, which recount in solemn cantos, the deeds of knighthood founded by our victorious kings, and from hence had in renown over all Christendom. There I read it in the oath of every knight, that he should defend to the expense of his best blood, or of his life, if it so befel him, the honour and chastity of virgin or matron; from whence even then I learned what a noble virtue chastity sure must be, to the defence of which so many worthies, by such a dear adventure of themselves, had sworn;" * * * "So that even these books, which to many others have been the fuel of wantonness and loose living, I cannot think how, unless by divine indulgence, proved to me so many incitements, as you have heard, to the love and steadfast observation of virtue." Ibid.

All Milton's habits were expressive of a refined and self-denying character. When charged by his unprincipled slanderers with licentious habits, he thus gives an account of his morning hours.

"Those morning haunts are where they should be, at home; not sleeping, or concocting the surfeits of an irregular feast, but up and stirring, in winter often ere the sound of any bell awake men to labour, or to devotion; in summer as oft with the bird that first rouses, or not much tardier, to read good authors, or cause them to be read, till the attention be weary, or memory have its full fraught: then with useful and generous labours preserving the body's health and hardiness to render lightsome, clear, and not lumpish obedience to the mind, to the cause of religion, and our country's liberty, when it shall require firm hearts in sound bodies to stand and cover their stations, rather than to see the ruin of our protestation, and the enforcement of a slavish life." Vol. I. p. 220.

We have enlarged on the strictness and loftiness of Milton's virtue, not only from our interest in the subject, but that we may put to shame and silence those men who make genius an apology for vice, and take the sacred fire, kindled by God within them, to inflame men's passions, and to minister to a vile sensuality.

We see Milton's greatness of mind, in his fervent and constant attachment to liberty. Freedom in all its forms and branches was dear to him, but especially freedom of

thought and speech, of conscience and worship, freedom to seek, profess, and propagate truth. The liberty of ordinary politicians, which protects men's outward rights, and removes restraints to the pursuit of property and outward good, fell very short of that for which Milton lived and was ready to die. The tyranny which he hated most, was that which broke the intellectual and moral power of the community. The worst feature of the institutions which he assailed, was, that they fettered the mind. He felt within himself, that the human mind had a principle of perpetual growth, that it was essentially diffusive and made for progress, and he wished every chain broken, that it might run the race of truth and virtue with increasing ardour and success. This attachment to a spiritual and refined freedom, which never forsook him in the hottest controversies, contributed greatly to protect his genius, imagination, taste, and sensibility, from the withering and polluting influences of public station, and of the rage of parties. It threw a hue of poetry over politics, and gave a sublime reference to his service of the commonwealth. The fact that Milton, in that stormy day, and amidst the trials of public office, kept his high faculties undepraved, was a proof of no common greatness. Politics, however they make the intellect active, sagacious, and inventive, within a certain sphere, generally extinguish its thirst for universal truth, paralyze sentiment and imagination, corrupt the simplicity of the mind, destroy that confidence in human virtue, which lies at the foundation of philanthropy and generous sacrifices, and end in cold and prudent selfishness. Milton passed through a revolution, which in its last stages and issue, was peculiarly fitted to damp enthusiasm, to scatter the visions of hope, and to infuse doubts of the reality of virtuous principle; and yet the ardour, and moral feeling, and enthusiasm of his youth came forth unhurt, and even exalted from the trial.

Before quitting the subject of Milton's devotion to liberty, it ought to be recorded, that he wrote his celebrated "Defence of the People of England," after being distinctly forewarned by his physicians, that the effect of this exertion would be the utter loss of sight. His reference to this part of his history, in a short poetical effusion, is too characteristic to be withheld. It is inscribed to Cyriac Skinner, the friend to whom he appears to have confided his lately discovered "Treatise on Christian Doctrine."

Cyriac, this three-years-day, these eyes, though clear
To outward view, of blemish or of spot,
Bereft of light their seeing have forgot,
Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear
Of sun, or moon, or star, throughout the year,
Or man, or woman. Yet I argue not
Against heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope; but still bear up and steer
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask?
The conscience, Friend, to have lost them overplied
In liberty's defence, my noble task,
Of which all Europe rings from side to side.
This thought might lead me through the world's vain mask,
Content, though blind, had I no better guide.—*Sonnet* 22.

We see Milton's magnanimity in the circumstances under which Paradise Lost was written. It was not in prosperity, in honour, and amidst triumphs, but in disappointment, desertion, and in what the world calls disgrace, that he composed that work. The cause, with which he had identified himself, had failed. His friends were scattered; liberty was trodden under foot; and her devoted champion was a by-word among the triumphant royalists. But it is the prerogative of true greatness, to glorify itself in adversity, and to meditate and execute vast enterprises in defeat. Milton, fallen in outward condition, afflicted with blindness, disappointed in his best hopes, applied himself with characteristic energy to the sublimest achievement of intellect, solacing himself with great thoughts, with splendid creations, and with a prophetic confidence, that however neglected in his own age, he was framing in his works a bond of union and fellowship with the illustrious spirits of a brighter day. We delight to contemplate him in his retreat and last years. To the passing spectator, he seemed fallen and forsaken, and his blindness was reproached as a judgment from God. But though sightless, he lived in light. His inward eye ranged through universal nature, and his imagination shed on it brighter beams than the sun. Heaven, and Hell, and Paradise, were open to him. He visited past ages, and gathered round him ancient sages and heroes, prophets and apostles, brave knights and gifted bards. As he looked forward, ages of liberty dawned and rose to his view, and he felt, that he was about to bequeath to them an inheritance of genius "which would not fade away," and was to live in the memory, reverence, and love of remotest generations.

We have enlarged on Milton's character, not only from the pleasure of paying that sacred debt, which the mind

owes to him who has quickened and delighted it, but from an apprehension that Milton has not yet reaped his due harvest of esteem and veneration. The envious mists, which the prejudices and bigotry of Johnson spread over his bright name, are not yet wholly scattered, though fast passing away. We wish not to disparage Johnson. We could find no pleasure in sacrificing one great man to the manes of another. But we owe it to Milton and to other illustrious names, to say, that Johnson has failed of the highest end of biography, which is to give immortality to virtue, and to call forth fervent admiration towards those who have shed splendour on past ages. We acquit Johnson, however, of intentional misrepresentation. He did not and could not appreciate Milton. We doubt whether two other minds, having so little in common as those of which we are now speaking, can be found in the higher walks of literature. Johnson was great in his own sphere, but that sphere was comparatively "of the earth;" whilst Milton's was only inferior to that of angels. It was customary in the day of Johnson's glory, to call him a giant, to class him with a mighty but still an earth-born race. Milton we should rank among seraphs. Johnson's mind acted chiefly on man's actual condition, on the realities of life, on the springs of human action, on the passions which now agitate society, and he seems hardly to have dreamed of a higher state of the human mind than was then exhibited. Milton, on the other hand, burned with a deep yet calm love of moral grandeur and celestial purity. He thought not so much of what man is, as of what he might become. His own mind was a revelation to him of a higher condition of humanity, and to promote this he thirsted and toiled for freedom, as the element for the growth and improvement of his nature. In religion, Johnson was gloomy and inclined to superstition, and on the subject of government leaned towards absolute power; and the idea of reforming either, never entered his mind but to disturb and provoke it. The church and the civil polity under which he lived, seemed to him perfect, unless he may have thought that the former would be improved by a larger infusion of Romish rites and doctrines, and the latter, by an enlargement of the royal prerogative. Hence, a tame acquiescence in the present forms of religion and government, marks his works. Hence we find so little in his writings, which is electric and soul-kindling, and which gives the

reader a consciousness of being made for a state of loftier thought and feeling than the present. Milton's whole soul, on the contrary, revolted against the maxims of legitimacy, hereditary faith, and servile reverence for established power. He could not brook the bondage to which men had bowed for ages. "Reformation" was the first word of public warning which broke from his youthful lips, and the hope of it was a fire in his aged breast. The difference between Milton and Johnson, may be traced not only in these great features of mind, but in their whole characters. Milton was refined and spiritual in his habits, temperate almost to abstemiousness, and refreshed himself after intellectual effort by music. Johnson inclined to more sensual delights. Milton was exquisitely alive to the outward creation, to sounds, motions, and forms, to natural beauty and grandeur. Johnson, through defect of physical organization, if not through deeper deficiency, had little susceptibility of these pure and delicate pleasures, and would not have exchanged the Strand for the vale of Tempe or the gardens of the Hesperides. How could Johnson be just to Milton! The comparison, which we have instituted, has compelled us to notice Johnson's defects. But we trust we are not blind to his merits. His stately march, his pomp and power of language, his strength of thought, his reverence for virtue and religion, his vigorous logic, his practical wisdom, his insight into the springs of human action, and the solemn pathos, which occasionally pervades his descriptions of life and his references to his own history, command our willing admiration. That he wanted enthusiasm, and creative imagination, and lofty sentiment, was not his fault. We do not blame him for not being Milton. We love intellectual power in all its forms, and delight in the variety of mind. We blame him only, that his passions, prejudices, and bigotry, engaged him in the unworthy task of obscuring the brighter glory of one of the most gifted and virtuous men. We would even treat what we deem the faults of Johnson with a tenderness approaching respect; for they were results, to a degree which man cannot estimate, of a diseased, irritable, nervous, unhappy physical temperament, and belonged to the body more than to the mind. We only ask the friends of genius, not to put their faith in Johnson's delineations of it. His biographical works are tinged with his notoriously strong prejudices, and of all

his "Lives," we hold that of Milton to be the most apocryphal.

We here close our general remarks on Milton's intellectual and moral qualities. We venerate him as a man of genius; but still more as a man of magnanimity and Christian virtue, who regarded genius and poetry as sacred gifts, imparted to him not to amuse men, or to build up a reputation, but that he might quicken and call forth what was great and divine in his fellow-creatures, and might secure the only true fame, the admiration of minds which his writings were to kindle and exalt.

We come now to the examination of the newly discovered "Treatise on Christian Doctrine." This work, we have said, owes its chief interest to the character of its author. From its very nature, it cannot engage and fix general attention. It consists very much of collections of texts of Scripture, which, however exciting in their proper places, are read with little thought or emotion when taken from their ordinary connexion, and marshalled under systematic heads. Milton aims to give us the doctrines of Revelation in its own words. We have them in a phraseology long familiar to us; and we are disappointed; for we expected to see them, not in the language of the Bible, but as existing in the mind of Milton, modified by his peculiar intellect and sensibility, combined and embodied with his various knowledge, illustrated by the analogies, brightened by the new lights, and clothed with the associations with which they were surrounded by this gifted man. We hoped to see these doctrines as they were viewed by Milton in his moments of solemn feeling and deep contemplation, when they pervaded and moved his whole soul. Still there are passages in which Milton's mind is laid open to us. We refer to the parts of the work, where the peculiarity of his opinions obliges him to state his reasons for adopting them; and these we value highly, for the vigour and independence of intellect with which they are impressed. The work is plain and unambitious in style. Its characteristics are a calm earnestness, and that profound veneration for Scripture, which certain denominations of Christians, who have little congeniality with Milton, seem to claim as a monopoly.

His introduction is worthy of every man's attention, as a deliberate, mild assertion of the dearest right of human nature, that of free inquiry.

"If I communicate the result of my inquiries to the world at large; if, as God is my witness, it be with a friendly and benignant feeling towards mankind, that I readily give as wide a circulation as possible to what I esteem my best and richest possession, I hope to meet with a candid reception from all parties, and that none at least will take unjust offence, even though many things should be brought to light, which will at once be seen to differ from certain received opinions. I earnestly beseech all lovers of truth, not to cry out that the church is thrown into confusion, by that freedom of discussion and inquiry which is granted to the schools, and ought certainly to be refused to no believer, since we are ordered to *prove all things*, and since the daily progress of the light of truth, is productive far less of disturbance to the church, than of illumination and edification." Vol. I. p. 5, 6.

"It has also been my object, to make it appear from the opinions I shall be found to have advanced, whether new or old, of how much consequence to the Christian religion, is the liberty, not only of winnowing and sifting every doctrine, but also of thinking and even writing respecting it, according to our individual faith and persuasion; an inference which will be stronger in proportion to the weight and importance of those opinions, or rather in proportion to the authority of Scripture, on the abundant testimony of which they rest. Without this liberty, there is neither religion nor gospel—force alone prevails,—by which it is disgraceful for the Christian religion to be supported. Without this liberty, we are still enslaved, not indeed, as formerly, under the divine law, but, what is worst of all, under the law of man, or, to speak more truly, under a barbarous tyranny." Vol. I. p. 7, 8.

On that great subject, the character of God, Milton has given nothing particularly worthy of notice, except that he is more disposed than Christians in general, to conceive of the Supreme Being under the forms and affections of human nature.

"If God habitually assign to himself the members and form of man, why should we be afraid of attributing to him what he attributes to himself, so long as what is imperfection and weakness, when viewed in reference to ourselves, be considered as most complete and excellent whenever it is imputed to God." Vol. I. p. 23.

Milton is not the first Christian, who has thought to

render the Supreme Being more interesting, by giving him human shape. We doubt the wisdom of this expedient. To spiritualise our conceptions of him, seems to us the true process for strengthening our intimacy with him; for in this way only can we think of him as immediately present to our minds. As far as we give him a material form, we must assign to him a place, and that place will almost necessarily be a distant one, and thus we shall remove him from the soul which is his true temple. Besides, a definite form clashes with God's infinity, which is his supreme distinction, and on no account to be obscured; for, strange as it may seem to those who know not their own nature, this incomprehensible attribute, is that which, above all things, constitutes the correspondence or adaptation, if we may so speak, of God to the human mind.

In treating of God's Efficiency, Milton strenuously maintains human freedom, in opposition to the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination. He maintains, that God's decrees do not encroach on moral liberty; for our free agency is the very object decreed and predestined by the Creator. He maintains that some of the passages of Scripture, which speak of election, are to be understood of an election to outward privileges, not to everlasting life; and that in other texts, which relate to the future state, the election spoken of, is not an arbitrary choice of individuals, but of that class or description of persons, be it large or small, who shall comply with the prescribed terms of salvation; in other words, it is a conditional, not an absolute election, and such that every individual, if he will, may be included in it. Milton has so far told us truth. We wish that we could add, that he had thrown new light on free agency. This great subject has indeed baffled, as yet, the deepest thinkers, and seems now to be consigned with other sublime topics, under the sweeping denomination of metaphysics, to general neglect. But let it not be given up in despair. The time is coming, when the human intellect is to strike into new fields, and to view itself, and its Creator, and the universe from new positions, and we trust, that the darkness which has so long hung over our moral nature, will be gradually dispersed. This attribute of free agency, through which an intelligent being is strictly and properly a cause, an agent, an *originator* of moral good, or moral evil, and not a mere machine, determined by outward influences, or by a secret, yet resistless, efficiency of

God, which virtually makes Him the author, and only author, of all human actions; this moral freedom, which is the best image of the creative energy of the Deity, seems to us the noblest object of philosophical investigation. However questioned, and darkened by a host of metaphysicians, it is recognised in the common consciousness of every human being. It is the ground of responsibility, the fountain of moral feeling. It is involved in all moral judgments and affections, and thus gives to social life its whole interest; whilst it is the chief tie between the soul and its Creator. The fact, that philosophers have attempted to discard free agency from their explanations of moral phenomena, and to subject all human action to necessity, to mechanical causes, or other extraneous influences, is proof enough, that the science of the mind has, as yet, penetrated little beneath the surface, that the depths of the soul are still unexplored.

Milton naturally passes from his chapter on the Supreme Being, to the consideration of those topics, which have always been connected with this part of theology; we mean, the character of Jesus Christ, and the nature of the Holy Spirit. All our readers are probably aware, that Milton has here declared himself an anti-trinitarian, and strenuously asserted the strict and proper unity of God. His chapter on "the Son of God," is the most elaborate one in the work. His "prefatory remarks," are highly interesting, as joining with a manly assertion of his right, an affectionate desire to conciliate the Christians from whom he differed.

"I cannot enter upon subjects of so much difficulty, as the *Son of God* and the *Holy Spirit*, without again premising a few introductory words. If, indeed, I were a member of the church of Rome, which requires implicit obedience to its creed on all points of faith, I should have acquiesced from education or habit, in its simple decree and authority, even though it denies that the doctrine of the Trinity, as now received, is capable of being proved from any passage of Scripture. But since I enrol myself among the number of those who acknowledge the Word of God alone as the rule of faith, and freely advance what appears to me much more clearly deducible from the Holy Scriptures, than the commonly received opinion, I see no reason, why any one who belongs to the same Protestant or Reformed Church, and professes to acknowledge

the same rule of faith as myself, should take offence at my freedom, particularly as I impose my authority on no one, but merely propose what I think more worthy of belief than the creed in general acceptation. I only entreat, that my readers will ponder and examine my statements, in a spirit which desires to discover nothing but the truth, and with a mind free from prejudice. For, without intending to oppose the authority of Scripture, which I consider inviolably sacred, I only take upon myself to refute human interpretations, as often as the occasion requires, conformably to my right, or rather to my duty, as a man. If, indeed, those with whom I have to contend, were able to produce direct attestation from heaven, to the truth of the doctrine which they espouse, it would be nothing less than impiety to venture to raise, I do not say a clamour, but so much as a murmur against it. But, inasmuch as they can lay claim to nothing more than human powers, assisted by that spiritual illumination which is common to all, it is not unreasonable, that they should on their part allow the privileges of diligent research and free discussion to another inquirer, who is seeking truth through the same means, and in the same way, as themselves, and whose desire of benefiting mankind is equal to their own." Vol. I. p. 103, 104, 105.

Milton teaches, that the Son of God is a distinct being from God, and inferior to him, that he existed before the world was made, that he is the first of the creation of God, and that afterwards, all other things were made by him, as the instrument or minister of his Father. He maintains, in agreement with Dr. Clarke, that the Holy Spirit is a person, an intelligent agent, but created and inferior to God. This opinion of Milton is the more remarkable, because he admits, that before the time of Christ, the Jews, though accustomed to the phrase, Holy Spirit, never attached to it the idea of personality, and that both in the Old and the New Testament, it is often used to express God himself, or his power and agency. It is strange, that after these concessions, he could have found a difficulty in giving a figurative interpretation to the few passages in the New Testament, which speak of the Holy Spirit as a person.

We are unable, within our limits, to give a sketch of Milton's strong reasoning against the Supreme Divinity of Jesus Christ. We must, however, pause a moment to

thank God, that he has raised up this illustrious advocate of the long obscured doctrine of the Divine Unity. We can now bring forward the three greatest and noblest minds of modern times, and, we may add, of the Christian era, as witnesses to that Great Truth, of which, in an humbler and narrower sphere, we desire to be the defenders. Our Trinitarian adversaries are perpetually ringing in our ears, the names of Fathers and Reformers. We take MILTON, LOCKE, and NEWTON, and place them in our front, and want no others to oppose to the whole array of great names on the opposite side. Before these intellectual suns, the stars of self-named orthodoxy "hide their diminished heads." To these eminent men, God communicated such unusual measures of light and mental energy, that their names spring up spontaneously, when we think or would speak of the greatness of our nature. Their theological opinions were the fruits of patient, profound, reverent study of the Scriptures. They came to this work, with minds not narrowed by a technical, professional education, but accustomed to broad views, to the widest range of thought. They were shackled by no party connections. They were warped by no clerical ambition, and subdued by no clerical timidity. They came to this subject in the fulness of their strength, with free minds open to truth, and with unstained purity of life. They came to it, in an age, when the doctrine of the Trinity was instilled by education, and upheld by the authority of the church, and by penal laws. And what did these great and good men, whose intellectual energy, and love of truth, have made them the chief benefactors of the human mind, what, we ask, did they discover in the Scriptures? a triple divinity? three infinite agents? three infinite objects of worship? three persons, each of whom possesses his own distinct offices, and yet shares equally in the godhead with the rest? Oh no! Scripture joined with nature and with that secret voice in the heart, which even idolatry could not always stifle, and taught them to bow reverently before the One Infinite Father, and to ascribe to Him alone, supreme self-existent Divinity.

We have called Milton an anti-trinitarian. But we have no desire to identify him with any sect. His mind was too independent and universal, to narrow itself to human creeds and parties. He is supposed to have separated himself in his last years from all the denomina-

tions around him; and were he now living, we are not sure that he would find one to which he would be strongly attracted. He would probably stand first among that class of Christians, more numerous than is supposed, and, we hope, increasing, who are too jealous of the rights of the mind, and too dissatisfied with the clashing systems of the age, to attach themselves closely to any party; in whom the present improved state of theology has created a consciousness of defect, rather than the triumph of acquisition; who, however partial to their own creed, cannot persuade themselves, that it is the ultimate attainment of the human mind, and that distant ages will repeat its articles as reverently as the Catholics do the decrees of Trent; who contend earnestly for free inquiry, not because all who inquire will think as they do, but because some at least may be expected to outstrip them, and to be guides to higher truth. With this nameless and spreading class, we have strong sympathies. We want new light, and care not whence it comes; we want reformers worthy of the name; and we should rejoice in such a manifestation of Christianity, as would throw all present systems into obscurity.

(To be Concluded in our next.)

To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.

SIR, *ISLINGTON, 14th Dec.* 1826.

I AM now in possession of three Numbers of your valuable little Periodical, the Christian Pioneer, and thank you for them. Truly laudable is their purport, of upholding the great doctrines of the Reformation—which you justly pronounce to be—*the sufficiency of Scripture —the right of individual judgment, and of fearless free inquiry.* Indeed, without the maintenance of these fundamental positions, we could not assert the truth, and point out the excellence of primitive Christianity. The road leading to *the Temple of Truth* is so overgrown with the brambles of long established and inveterate error, that the keen and well-tempered axe of the Christian Pioneer, becomes necessary to hew them down—when *the divine Edifice*, will be accessible to all who feel inclined to behold it in its finished proportions and consummate beauty.

Educated in Scotland, I cherish an interest in her welfare and prosperity. Her love of science, her habits of

industry, and, above all, her zeal for religion, have established her fame throughout the earth. At Aberdeen and Edinburgh, I passed four of the pleasantest years of my life. The public instructions of Campbell, of Gerard, and of Blair, I recollect with satisfaction. The lectures of the two former, which I attended twice a-week, at the Divinity-Hall—replete with good sense, and unostentatious piety—have left an indelible impression on my heart. *They* first taught me to think and reason for myself, in matters of religion—at the same time uniformly guarding the pupil against intolerance and bigotry. Such tutors are not always to be found, either in the Scotch or in the English Universities. But be their theological systems what they may—reputedly orthodox, or reputedly heterodox—hallowed be their memory! I doubt not, Mr. Editor, that in your well-directed labours, you will mingle with your zeal for the promotion of what you conceive to be *truth*, the divine ingredient of *charity*. Much allowance must be made for the weakness and fallibility of the human understanding—much, for the almost indissoluble strength of prejudice, particularly the bias of education, which holds in chains even the strongest minds. We wonder, and justly wonder, how a Fenelon, and a Paschal, could be found in the bosom of the Romish Church—not to mention the names of other persons, even of our Protestant communion, who cling to the grossest errors, even to the close of life! This ought not, indeed, to abate our zeal, or diminish our exertion to set them right in matters of faith and practice; but it should temper our ardour, and augment our kindness towards our erring brethren—with Bishop Watson, it should teach every individual, of every denomination, to exclaim—"May the time speedily arrive, when every one shall love his own *heresy* less than Gospel *charity!*"

You have, Mr. Editor, my best wishes for success. In diffusing a love of the Holy Scriptures, by asserting their *sufficiency*, thus promoting the exercise of *the right of private judgment*, and the indulgence of *fearless free inquiry*, you are entitled to the undissembled thanks of every friend of reformed Christianity. Wherever the Bible goes, at home or abroad, and is justly interpreted, it must do good. It enlarges the understanding, by reprobating implicit faith—and it amends the heart, by enforcing the kindest emotions of love and philanthropy.

To enliven my communication, I will close with an anecdote from Lambert's Travels into Canada, 1806, where the established religion is Popery, under the strange anomaly of a Protestant head; and where, of course, the inhabitants have still to enjoy the blessings of the Reformation. "Our pilot, Louis le Clair," says Mr. Lambert, "an old French Canadian, a few years ago picked up an English Bible, which had been thrown ashore from the wreck of a ship; as he understood the language, he read it through, and it opened his eyes so much, that he could not forbear, soon after, disputing with his Priest upon certain points of religion. The latter was much surprised to find him so knowing, and inquired how he obtained his information; upon which, the old man showed him his Bible. The Priest declared, it was not a fit book for him to read, and desired he would give it into his charge. This the Pilot refused, and the Curè threatened to write to the Bishop, and have him excommunicated as a *heretic!* Finding, however, that neither threats nor entreaties had any effect, he was necessitated to request that he would *keep it to himself*, and not let *any of his neighbours* know that he had such a Book! The old Pilot declared, that he considered the finding of that Bible the happiest event of his life, in consequence of the comfort and consolation which he derived from the perusal of it."

In Scotland, Mr. Editor, there is, happily, no want of Bibles—your *only* task is, to obtain the right interpretation of them—accompanied with a uniform exemplification of their spirit.

I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

J. EVANS.

Thoughts for a New Year.

The wise often feel themselves called on, and the most unthinking are sometimes compelled, by various occasions and events, to reflect with seriousness on the great objects and duties of life. Some are easily excited, while others are hardly to be roused; but there are few, or none, who have not their sober, or it may be, sad moments, in which they are brought to acknowledge that life is a trust, and to resolve that it shall be improved, or weep that it has been abused.

The circumstances are not to be numbered, which, in this changing world, are the causes of serious thought to thinking men. A withered leaf, or a faded flower, the waning moon, or the setting sun, a public calamity, or a private sorrow, the careless gaiety of childhood, and the faltering step of age, magnificence and misery, a splendid pageant, a solitary tear, a baptism, a funeral, an accident, sickness, or death, have all a voice, a moral, and a warning.

The seasons of the year, too, speak in almost human language; and men have been fond of tracing, in their various phenomena, resemblances to their own existence, feelings, and pursuits. Youth and spring have been joined together with bands of flowers; the fruits of summer have imaged our maturity; our decline is foretold by the brown hues of autumn; and winter has lent to age its hoar-frost and its snows.

The notice so generally taken of the day which has been fixed upon to commence our years, is proof that it is connected with many human sympathies. How, indeed, can we help being affected by the silent marks which measure out our lives, and serve as stated boundaries to the mysterious progression of time?

Religion gives a deep interest to notices like these, and leads us to value and improve them, and raises our thoughts from the divisions and events of time, to Him who is without beginning and without end.

If we feel in a proper manner our dependence on God, and the responsibility of our actions, we shall often look back on the experiences of the *past*, and forward to the promises and requisitions of the *future*. At the commencement of a new year, especially, we shall be disposed to think on what the last has received and returned, and on what the coming one should accomplish.

In the year which has gone by, we have been supported, as we have always been, by an arm which never tires, and supplied from a bounty which can never be exhausted. We have tasted of joys till we have expected them as our right, and comforts have been so liberally imparted to us, that we have ceased to remark them. We can recal many instances in which we have been rescued from sudden pain and death. Troubles have been averted, griefs have been alleviated, losses have been repaired. We have been saved when we had despaired of help, and snatched from the waters, when they had well nigh gone over us. Even

the trials and afflictions which we have met with, have resulted in our benefit. They have softened our tempers, or humbled our pride, checked us in an evil course, or fixed us in a good one, and thus have assumed at last the aspect, the offices, and the character of blessings.

How have we shown our sense of these favours? What has been our gratitude, and what service have we rendered? If we answer truly, we shall have little reason to be satisfied with our review. Our consciences will repeat a long and fearful account of opportunities neglected, talents unimproved, powers perverted, time mispent, warnings unheeded, and promises unperformed. Many an evil consequence rises up to point at our misdeeds, and our bosoms will acknowledge their own unthankfulness. We shall be obliged to confess, that selfishness has often silenced the voice of our better feelings, that interest has prevailed over duty, fashion over propriety, and habit over conviction. We shall remember, and we ought to remember, with shame and contrition, that we have suffered ourselves to listen, again and again, to the suggestions of passion and temptation—to listen and to yield—though experience admonished, and instruction forbade, and principle resisted, and wisdom cried aloud.

We cannot, in our defence, plead ignorance, nor want of means. We cannot deny that we have had ample assistance, motive, and encouragement, from early education, from books, counsel, religion, Christian society, and Christian example.

But we trust that we have effected some good. We trust, that amid all our follies and sins, we have performed some actions which have proceeded from virtuous intentions, and terminated in beneficial results. Notwithstanding our weakness and rashness, we have sometimes resisted with success, and fled when flight was victory. Let us thank God for that; not however in the spirit of the Pharisee's thanksgiving; not to indulge a spiritual vain-glory, nor to flatter a false security; but with a feeling of humble gratitude, and that our souls may perceive the value, and the beauty of holiness. While we lament that we have done so little good, let us be truly grateful for the little which we have done; for if there is any thing to thank God for, it is, that we have been able, in any degree, to imitate and obey him.

From this train of meditations on the past, our thoughts

on the future will naturally follow. We cannot believe that God will cease to be merciful to us, that he will withdraw his support, or shorten his hand. Let us endeavour to evince our gratitude for his unmerited goodness, by complying henceforth more carefully with his injunctions. If he is our Father, let us do him better honour; and if he is our Master, let us serve him with a more constant fear. Our sorrow for our transgressions, if it is of any value, will stimulate our efforts to amend our lives; and the conviction of past inactivity and unprofitableness, if it is deep and strong, will give form and energy to our consequent resolutions.

And let us not linger, and delay, and look out for a more convenient season, as if we knew the measure of our days, and held time and opportunity in our own hands. The experience of every day, casualty in every shape, death on our right hand and on our left, should teach us a better wisdom. We aggravate our guilt exceedingly, by this foolish procrastination. Could we live the longest life of man, we should have little time enough to finish our task; but here we are without knowledge, and without security. The commencement of another year we may never see.

If we were to lie down in the dust, and in the sleep of death, without a hope of ever waking again, we might indeed, with some show of reason, take our own ways, and defy their consequences. But we *shall* wake again, and wake to a life whose awards and destinies will depend on the manner in which we have spent the years of our probation, whether they have been many, or whether they have been few.

While we have time, let us employ it as we ought, for time is succeeded by eternity. Let every following year, while years are continued to us, be more full of good, and more free from evil, than the last; for they must soon be numbered; and then we go to meet our Judge.

The Apocryphal Question.

(Continued from page 134.)

The list of spurious passages, and of those the genuineness of which is doubtful, might be considerably increased. The received Canon not only contains some Apocryphal *texts*, but truth obliges us to declare, that there are some

books of the New Testament, which are not known to be written by the persons whose names they bear. We are aware, that we expose ourselves to additional obloquy, by this fearless statement of facts. But, in the pursuit of truth, we are not biassed by selfish considerations. We have no sinister ends to answer. Religion does not, *we believe*, require concealment, but enjoins its votaries to speak the truth, and the *whole* truth. We know the disingenuous use which the Edinburgh Committee have made of the candid statement of the Eclectic Review, respecting the Song of Solomon. The cause of the Edinburgh Committee, may require an appeal to the ignorance and bigotry of their friends, and render it necessary, that they should convert an unpopular suggestion into an offensive weapon, and place it, sharpened and poisoned, in the hands of their party, directed against their opponents. We shall, however, continue to act the open, ingenuous part, and leave the result to that wise Being, who will eventually frustrate the machinations of all the enemies of truth.

If the members of the Edinburgh Committee have perused the works of the Christian Fathers, or if they have read the extracts made by the learned, impartial, and pious Lardner, in his invaluable Credibility of the Gospel History, they must know, that of the works which are published in the commonly received version of the New Testament, as the Word of God, some were not generally received in the four first centuries of the Christian era, as the works of inspired writers. Notwithstanding the positive assertion of the Confession of Faith, "that all the commonly received works are given by inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life," Tertullian and Origen, and other early writers considered sound in the faith, did not attribute all the works which we receive, to the persons whose names they bear. The Epistle to the Hebrews is generally ascribed to Paul, but many of the Christian Fathers did not receive it as the composition of the Apostle of the Gentiles. Tertullian ascribed it to Barnabas; some of the primitive Christians thought it was the work of Luke, and others of Clement; and some acknowledged that the author was unknown. It is a very early production. Lardner believes that it was written by the Apostle Paul; but Le Clerc and Grotius, and other learned men, are of a different opinion. We need not wonder, says Grotius, that persons in the present day, doubt respect-

ing the author of this Epistle, as the ancients themselves acknowledge their ignorance on the subject. The genuineness of the book of the Revelation is also disputed. Dr. Priestley, and Unitarians generally, receive it as the work of the Apostle John, but as the external evidence is not unexceptionable, it cannot be positively attributed to the beloved disciple of our Lord. The Epistles commonly ascribed to the Apostles James and Jude, and the 2d of Peter, the 2d and 3d of John, were not universally received in the primitive Church, as the works of the Apostles. Concerning all these, Dr. Lardner observes, "that they should be allowed to be publicly read in Christian assemblies for the edification of the people, but not be alleged as affording, alone, sufficient proof of any doctrine." Unitarians, as the example of Lardner will testify, are not anxious, or disposed, to regard these as spurious compositions. And were they, as they are calumniously reported, inclined to receive, or reject, any portion of Scripture, according to its apparent agreement with, or discrepancy from, their system, they could have no desire to exclude these disputed books from the Sacred Canon. They are generally received by them as genuine works. They contain nothing opposed to their principles. From these disputed productions, very strong evidence may be adduced against the doctrines of reputed orthodoxy. The Epistle of James, in particular, forms a striking contrast to the "Confession of Faith," and the "Assembly's Catechism." The great simplicity of this letter, and its apparent contrariety to some much misunderstood expressions of the Apostle Paul, first induced, we think, suspicion of its genuineness. The philosophical Heathen converts to Christianity were fond of mystery, and would therefore be inclined to contemn a work, which inculcates, in the simplest language, the doctrines and precepts of pure and undefiled religion. This Epistle breathes the spirit of the Gospel. The internal seems to supply the deficiency of external evidence, that it is an Apostolic production. It seems highly probable, that the other disputed Epistles are genuine works. But all competent and impartial judges must admit, that they are not entitled to the same implicit credence and acceptance as the other books of the New Testament. They are possibly spurious, Apocryphal books, and therefore, without controversy, some distinguishing mark should be attached,

when they are published in the same volume, with works of undoubted genuineness. Unitarians, anxious to preserve the holy Scriptures pure and undefiled, have esteemed it a sacred duty, to apprise the reader in the Improved Version of the New Testament, of those books the genuineness of which was disputed by some of the early Christian writers. A regard to truth has led them to brave the expected clamours of bigotry, and the full cry of base hirelings. But have the Edinburgh Committee dared to encounter the pitiless storm of ignorance and superstition? Have they, who express so great an abhorrence of all Apocryphal books, who would prefer that the Word of Life should not be circulated at all, rather than that it should be dispersed with any mixture of human compositions, manifested a sincere regard for the Word of God, pure and undefiled, by publishing a translation of the New Testament, in which the works that have always been received in the Christian church, are distinguished from those the genuineness of which was at an early period doubted? Have these advocates of a pure circulation, shown an earnest wish, that the very docile, submissive, and all-confiding members of the Presbyterian Church should know the undoubted Oracles of God, and should receive as sacred Scripture, nothing but the works of the inspired writers? We know that they stand convicted of concealment. Spurious texts, and, probably, spurious books, are by them, published as the pure Word of God. We acknowledge that they are placed in an awkward dilemma. The Confession of Faith expressly declares, that all the commonly received books of the New Testament are given by inspiration of God. Deny the soundness of the Confession of Faith! Surely you would not oblige us to make this sacrifice. We have witnessed this good Confession—by it we have our bread—it is the breath of our nostrils—the source of our popularity! To tell the people that some of the books bound with the New Testament, are not known to have been given "by inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life,"—that they may be spurious, Apocryphal books,—would expose us to a loud and violent clamour from the majority of the people, who, loving darkness rather than light, cannot endure the brilliancy of truth, and would rise up in arms against those who should have the honesty and fortitude to attack their prejudices, and endeavour to correct their errors. Would

you have us destroy our usefulness, and sacrifice our worldly comforts in behalf of those who now submissively receive our words as the bread of life, and hug the chains which we have put on with the Assembly's Catechism, and rivetted with the Confession of Faith? Or, perhaps, some who have not yet learned to prostrate their understandings, might be led to examine into the soundness of their creed, and to question the accordance of the doctrines of the Confession of Faith, with the dictates of reason and the language of Scripture. It is possible, that motives of this nature may cause the Edinburgh Committee to afford so edifying a public spectacle of great inconsistency—of loud *professions* of earnest regard for a pure circulation of the Bible—and of *conduct* diametrically opposed to their avowed principles. Compare their words with their actions. How surprising the contrast! They say, and do not.

But we have not yet done. Have these advocates for the circulation of the Word of God pure and undefiled, thought it worth their while to endeavour to make the Scriptures intelligible, by publishing as correct a translation of them as the present improved state of Biblical criticism would furnish? *We* think it a matter of no small importance, that the Scriptures, which are able to make us wise unto salvation, should be presented to the English reader as free from error as possible. The common version, it is well known, abounds with errors. It is not only translated from an edition of the Greek Testament containing many spurious passages, but is also, in very many places, a very incorrect version of this undeservedly received text. Many passages, in the prophetical books of the Old Testament, and in Paul's Epistles in particular, are so completely unintelligible, that it would be better that the English reader should have had the original Hebrew and Greek. He would, in this case, have been spared much needless study and solicitude; whereas, he is now puzzled in attempts to make out the sense of passages which are inexplicable, and is not unfrequently led to wrest them to countenance favourite notions of which the sacred writers had no conception. "I cannot but mention," observes Bishop Lowth, "what hath often been represented, and, I hope, will not always be represented in vain, that nothing would more effectually conduce to this end (the advancement of the kingdom of God), than the exhibiting the holy Scriptures themselves to the people

in a more advantageous and just light, by an accurate revisal of our vulgar translation. Though, as to the style and language, our present version admits of but little improvement, yet, in respect of sense and accuracy of interpretation, the improvements of which it is capable, are great and numberless." Dr. Macknight says, of the common version, "It is by no means such a representation of the inspired originals, as merits to be implicitly relied on, for determining the controverted articles of the Christian faith, and for quieting the dissensions which have rent the Church." See, also, Dr. Campbell's Dissertation XI. A long list of highly respectable persons in the Churches of England and Scotland, might be made, who have expressed their opinion respecting the great inaccuracy of our common version. In the words of Stackhouse, "when the original is figurative, our translators, in several places, have expressed it in a way not accommodated to our present notions of things; when there is an ambiguity in a word or phrase, they have frequently taken it in a wrong sense, and for want of attending to the translation or context, have run into some errors, and, many times, unintelligible diction; sometimes they have fallen upon a sense quite opposite to the original." Respecting the Apocryphal postscript to the book of Job, Dr. Wardlaw says, "This postscript, may, I presume, be regarded as of much the same authority with those subjoined to the Apostolic Epistles in our own English New Testaments, all of which are spurious, and some of them palpably false, but which continue to be printed as a part of our authorised version, and, by ignorant and thoughtless people, not unfrequently, I believe, considered as authentic. I should be for expunging every thing of the kind."

Valuing the Scriptures as the best gift of God to man, we think that every possible means should be used to give a faithful translation of their sacred contents. We are utterly at a loss to reconcile the indifference of the Edinburgh Committee to this most momentous subject, with their professions of regard for a pure circulation of the undefiled Scriptures. How can men, holding their responsible stations, possessing their abundant means, and enjoying their almost papal influence, anathematise the Apocryphal practices of the London Committee, make loud professions of regard for the pure Word of God, and utter abhorrence of all spurious passages, and of all pious frauds,—find any

peace to their souls, so long as they use no means to give the people a correct translation of a correct edition of the New Testament—a translation which they can understand, and which will do justice to the original languages. After reading their statements, and hearing their professions, we naturally consider their conduct; and we discover the greatest possible inconsistency. We are irresistibly led to suspect, that other motives than those of a sincere regard for the Word of God, pure and undefiled, have excited this mighty storm, and caused this unnatural, unwarranted separation from the Parent Society. Perhaps the London Committee did not pay sufficient deference to the learned doctors of the Presbyterian Church! Human nature is fond of power. It is not unnatural that the Scotch clergy should desire unrestrained authority, and possess entire the influence resulting from a distribution of the funds of the Society. We confess, that the spirit displayed in the Edinburgh statements, and the domineering temper exhibited in the Bible Society meetings of the North, have induced a suspicion, that the Apocrypha, though the *ostensible*, is not the *real* cause of secession. We have shown the gross inconsistency between the professions and the conduct of these seceders. Whilst they strain at a gnat, they swallow a camel. Whilst they indulge in the bitterest invective against the conduct of the London Committee, they are convicted of themselves sanctioning pious frauds and Apocryphal practices.

We did intend to make some observations on the pious falsehood, that the Scriptures are published without note or comment. Every chapter is prefaced with notes, some of which are very objectionable. They not unfrequently mislead the reader, and bias his mind in favour of particular systems. See, for instance, the preface to the first chapter of John. Let the Edinburgh Committee consider these things. Let them not deceive with their lips. Let him among them that is without sin, cast the first stone at the London Committee. Who are ye that judge others, for wherein ye judge, ye condemn yourselves; for ye that judge do the same things. B.

To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.

Sir,

If Christ was only a mere man, as is alleged by all Unitarian Christians, I should like to know, through

your excellent little Miscellany, in what sense the following passages of Scripture are to be understood.

"Where two or three are gathered together in *my name, there am I* in the *midst* of them."

"And, without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness; *God was manifest in the flesh,*" &c.—And also, Isaiah ix. 6.—Matthew i. 23.—Colossians i. 15–19; ii. 9.—Timothy i. 1, 11; ii. 3.—Titus i. 3; ii. 10; iii. 4.—Hebrews i. 2; xiii. 8.

PHILO-VERITAS.

Glasgow, Dec. 1826.

If none of our Correspondents favour us with a reply to this letter, we shall give an explanation, in successive Numbers, not only of these passages, but of all the texts adduced to prove the Godhead of Jesus, beginning with those alleged to substantiate the doctrine of the Trinity. We would only now remark, that the assertion, "Christ was only a mere man, as is alleged by all Unitarian Christians," is not a correct representation.

EDITOR.

One Hundred Scriptural Arguments for the Unitarian Faith:—published in Boston, by the American Unitarian Association.

(Continued from page 127.)

36. Because he expressly denies that he is possessed of the divine attribute of *independent existence.* "As the living Father hath sent me, and *I live by the Father,*" &c.—John vi. 57.

37. Because he expressly disclaims the possession of the divine attribute of *underived existence.* "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he *given* to the Son to have life in himself."—John v. 26.

38. Because he positively denies, that he is possessed of the divine attribute of *omnipotence.* "I can of mine own self do nothing."—John v. 30.

39. Because he expressly disclaims the possession of the divine attribute of *omniscience.* "But of that day, and that hour, *knoweth* no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither *the Son,* but *my Father only.*"—Mat. xxiv. 36.—Mark xiii. 32.

40. Because Christ is said, in the Scriptures, to have been "*tempted of the devil.*"—Mat. iv. 1. But, "*God* cannot be tempted with evil."

41. Because it is related of our Saviour, that "he continued all night in *prayer* to God."—Luke vi. 12. Why should Christ thus pray, if he himself were God?

42. Because, in presence of a numerous company before the resurrection of Lazarus, *he gave thanks to the Father for having heard him.* "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me, and I knew that thou hearest me always."—John xi. 41, 42.

43. Because Jesus *besought his Father to glorify him.* "And now, O Father, *glorify thou me* with thyself, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."—John xvii. 5. The being who prayed to God to glorify him, *cannot* be God.

44. Because he *implored* that, if it were possible, the bitter cup might pass from him, adding, "nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."—Mat. xxvi. 39.

45. Because he said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"—Mat. xxvii. 46. *Can* he who uttered this be the supreme God?

46. Because he never paid his adorations to *himself, the Son,* nor to the *Holy Ghost,* as he should have done, had the Son and the Holy Ghost been *God;* but *always* to the *Father.*

47. Because he never instructed his disciples to worship *himself* or the *Holy Ghost,* but the *Father,* and the Father *only.* "When ye pray, say, Our *Father* which art in heaven."—Luke xi. 2. "In that day, *ye shall ask me nothing.* Whatsoever ye shall ask the *Father* in my name," &c.—John xvi. 23. "The hour cometh, and now is, when the *true worshippers shall worship the Father* in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh *such* to worship *him.*"—John iv. 23.

48. Because it was not the practice of the Apostles to pay religious homage to Christ, but to *God* the Father *through* Christ. "I thank God *through* Jesus Christ."—Rom. vii. 25. "To God *only* wise, be glory *through* Jesus Christ."—Rom. xvi. 27. "I bow my knees unto the *Father* of our Lord Jesus Christ."—Eph. iii. 14.

49. Because St. Peter, immediately after being filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, thus addressed the Jews; "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man *approved of God* among you by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which *God did by him* in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know; him,

being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain; *whom God hath raised up,*" &c. —Acts ii. 22, 23, 24.

50. Because St. Paul expressly states, that "*all things are of God,* who hath reconciled us to himself *by* Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. v. 18.

51. Because the same Apostle gives "thanks *to God,* who giveth us the victory, *through* our Lord Jesus Christ." —1 Cor. xv. 57.

52. Because it is said, that it is "*to the glory of God the Father,*" that "every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord."—Phil. ii. 11.

53. Because the Scriptures affirm, that "Christ *glorified not himself* to be made a high priest, but He [glorified him] who said unto him, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee."—Heb. v. 5.

54. Because it is expressly asserted, that *God gave to Christ* the Revelation which was made to the author of the Apocalypse.—Rev. i. 1.

55. Because an Apostle speaks of Christ, *only as the image* of God. "Who is the image of the invisible God." —Col. i. 15.—2 Cor. iv. 4. It would be absurd to call any one *his own image.*

56. Because Christ is stated to be "the *first-born* of every *creature.*"—Col. i. 15.

57. Because he is said to be "the beginning of the creation of God."—Rev. iii. 14.

58. Because the Scriptures affirm, in so many words, that "Jesus was made a little *lower* than the angels."— Heb. ii. 9. Can God become lower than his creatures?

59. Because Peter declares, that "*Christ received from God the Father honour and glory,* when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son," &c.—2 Peter i. 17.

60. Because it is represented as necessary that the Saviour of mankind should "*be made like unto his brethren.*"—Heb. ii. 17.

61. Because, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, Christ is *compared with Moses* in a manner that would be impious, if he were the Supreme God. "For this man [Christ] was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch," &c.—Heb. iii. 3.

62. Because he is represented as being the *servant,* the

chosen, the *beloved* of God, and the *recipient of God's Spirit*. "Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him," &c.—Mat. xii. 18.

63. Because he himself expressly declares, that it was in consequence of *his doing what pleased the Father*, that the Father was *with him, and did not leave him alone*. "He that *sent* me is *with me;* the Father hath not left me alone, for I do always those things that please him."—John viii. 29.

64. Because he is said to have "*increased* in wisdom, and in favour with *God* and man."—Luke ii. 52.

65. Because he speaks of himself as one who had *received commands* from the Father. "The Father, who sent me, he *gave me* a commandment."—John xii. 49.

66. Because he is represented as *obeying* the Father, and as having been "obedient unto death."—Phil. ii. 8. Even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.—John xii. 50. "I have kept my Father's commandments."—John xv. 10.

67. Because Christ "*learned obedience* by the things which he *suffered*," and *through sufferings was made perfect by God*.—Heb. v. 8.—ii. 10.

68. Because he is spoken of in the Scriptures as the *first-born among many brethren*.—Rom. viii. 29. Has God *brethren?*

69. Because Christ calls every one, who obeys God, his *brother*. "Whosoever shall do the will of *my Father* in heaven, the same is *my brother*."—Mat. xii. 50.

70. Because he offers to the faithful the like distinction and honour that himself has with the Father. "To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."—Rev. iii. 21.

71. Because *God*, in the latter ages, hath spoken *by his Son*, and *appointed him* heir of all things."—Heb. i. 2.

72. Because Christ is styled *the first begotten of the dead*.—Rev. i. 5.

73. Because it is declared, that *God raised him from the dead*. "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses."—Acts ii. 32.

74. Because God poured out upon the Apostles the Holy Spirit, *through Jesus Christ*.—Tit. iii. 6.

75. Because the reason, assigned for the Holy Spirit

not having been received earlier, is, that *Jesus was not then glorified.* "The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified."—John vii. 39.

76. Because it is affirmed, that Christ was *exalted by God,* to be a Prince and a Saviour.—Acts v. 31.

77. Because GOD *made* that same Jesus, who was crucified, both Lord and Christ.—Acts ii. 36.

78. Because GOD *gave him* a name which is above every name.—Phil. ii. 9.

79. Because Christ was *ordained of* God to be the judge of quick and dead.—Acts x. 42.

80. Because God will judge the secrets of men *by* Jesus Christ.—Rom. ii. 16.

81. Because all judgment *is committed* to Christ *by the Father.*—John v. 22.

82. Because our Saviour grounds the importance of his judgment solely upon the circumstance, that it is *not* exclusively *his own* judgment, which he pronounces, but that of the Father who sent him. "If I judge, my judgment is true; *for I am not alone,* but *I and the Father* that sent me."—John viii. 16.

83. Because it is said, that when he was received up into heaven, he "*sat on the right hand of God.*"—Mark xvi. 19.

84. Because St. Paul affirms, that Christ, even since his ascension, "liveth *unto* God," and "liveth *by* the power of God."—Rom. vi. 10.—2 Cor. xiii. 4.

85. Because it is affirmed of Christ, that "when all things shall be subdued under him, then shall the *Son also himself be subject* unto him that put all things under him, that *God may be all in all.*"—1 Cor. xv. 28.

86. Because, in the *prophecies* of the Old Testament that relate to Christ, he is spoken of as a being distinct from and inferior to God.—Deut. xviii. 15. John i. 45.

87. Because the Jews never expected, that any other than a being distinct from and inferior to God, was to be their Messiah, and yet there is no evidence that our Saviour ever so much as hinted to them that this expectation was erroneous.

88. Because it does not appear from the Scriptures, that the Jews, except in two instances, ever opposed our Saviour, on the ground that he pretended to *be God,* or *equal with God;* whereas, had it been his custom to assume such identity or equality, in his conversation with a

people so strongly attached to the doctrine of the *divine unity*, he would have found himself involved in a perpetual controversy with them on this point, some traces of which must have appeared in the New Testament.

89. Because, *in these two instances*, when charged, in the one case, with making himself God, and in the other, with making himself equal with God, he *positively denies the charges*. In reply to the charge of assuming to be *equal with God*, he says immediately, "The Son can do *nothing* of himself, but what he seeth the Father do;" and directly after, "I can of mine own self do nothing."—John v. 19, 30. In answer to the charge of *making himself God*, he appeals to the Jews, in substance, thus; Your own Scriptures call Moses a god, and your magistrates gods; I am surely not inferior to them, yet I did not call myself *God*, but only *Son* of God.—John x. 34, 35, 36.

90. Because, had his immediate disciples believed him to be the Almighty, would they have been so *familiar* with him, have *argued* with him, *betrayed* him, *denied* him, *fled from* him, and *left him to be dragged to the cross*?

91. Because the Apostles, after they had been filled with the Holy Ghost, on the day of pentecost, did not preach that Christ was God; but preached what was altogether inconsistent with such a doctrine.—Acts ii. 22; xiii. 23; xvii. 3, 31; xxii. 8.

92. Because there is no evidence to prove, that the first converts to Christianity ever incurred the imputation of *idolatry* from the Jews, as they must have done, had they believed and taught that the *Son*, as well as the *Father*, is Jehovah; while it is notorious, that this imputation has been among the most common of the Jewish reproaches against Christians, since the Trinity became a doctrine of the church.

93. Because there are, in the New Testament, 17 passages, wherein the *Father* is styled *one* or *only God*, while there is not a single passage in which the *Son* is so styled.

94. Because there are 320 passages, in which the *Father* is absolutely, and by way of *eminence*, called God; while there is *not one* in which the *Son* is thus called.

95. Because there are 105 passages, in which the *Father* is denominated God, with *peculiarly high titles and epithets*, whereas the *Son* is not once so denominated.

96. Because there are 90 passages, wherein it is declared, that *all prayers* and *praises* ought to be offered

to HIM, and that every thing ought to be ultimately directed to HIS *honour and glory;* while of the *Son* no such declaration is ever made.

97. Because, of 1300 passages in the New Testament, wherein the word *God* is mentioned, not one necessarily implies the existence of more than *one person* in the Godhead, or that this one is any other than the *Father.*

98. Because the passages, wherein the *Son* is declared, *positively,* or by the clearest implication, to be *subordinate to the Father, deriving his being from Him, receiving from Him his divine power, and acting in all things wholly according to His will,* are in number above 300.

99. Because, in a word, the supremacy of the Father and the inferiority of the Son, is the *simple unembarrassed,* and *current* doctrine of the Bible; whereas, that of their *equality* or *identity* is clothed in mystery, encumbered with difficulties, and dependent, at the best, upon few passages for support.

100. Because, finally, it appears from the records of the church, that the great body of primitive Christians, for the first two centuries, and longer, were believers in the *supremacy* of the *Father,* and the *subordination* of the *Son;* which could not have been, had the common doctrine of the Trinity been that of Christ and the Apostles.

Christianity in India.

EVERY sincere and practical believer in the divine origin of Christianity, must be anxious that its blessings should be communicated to all his brethren of mankind. Distinctions of country, of colour, or of caste, can have no influence but to increase his efforts, that the human race, whether barbarian, Scythian, bond, or free, should be gathered into one sheepfold, under one shepherd. Gladly will he avail himself of any circumstances which may appear to promise the progress of human improvement, the melioration of the condition of humanity. Let exertions be made to raise the intellectual condition of the oppressed African, or to stay the advance of the desolating wheels of an idol's chariot, the Christian will assuredly rejoice in these labours of benevolence, and hope that God may aid them. Such an individual may doubt the propriety and fitness of some of the plans adopted—he may see reason

to question the wisdom of many of the measures pursued, —but if he be really benevolent—if his be the spirit of Christ, he will not, for an instant, withhold his tribute of admiration and of praise, from those virtuous and excellent men, who have placed themselves between the living and the dead, to stay the plague. He may think that, in most instances, education should precede the distribution of the Bible—and that instruction in its evidences, and a faithful perusal of its contents, and a love of its moral perfection, should be inculcated, before engaging in the contemplation of what some may deem to be its peculiar doctrines,—but it would be alien to all his feelings, not to do justice to the motives which actuated such men as Martyn and Carey, with their fellow-labourers and successors in the great work of spreading abroad a knowledge of God and of his Christ. It is no slight task which the missionary undertakes. His moral courage must be excited and called forth by deepest reverence of God and truth, by heartfelt devotion to the good of man. It must be sustained, in his fearful combat with ignorance, superstition, idolatry, and vice, by higher and more sacred impulses than earthly interest or sublunary fame. The recompence of reward to him, consists not in the prebend's stall, or the glittering mitre—it arises from inward satisfaction at duties performed from a sacred reverence for Heaven's will, and from the conviction, that benevolence to man is the truest devotion to God. To men who thus have buckled on their armour—who have thus gone forth to speed the banner of the Cross—who have laboured to make the moral wilderness blossom as the rose—and who have quailed not in the midst of the numerous difficulties by which they were surrounded,—to these indefatigable men, we gladly acknowledge a debt of gratitude. We differ from them in faith, but we cheerfully unite with their brethren, in expressing admiration of their exertions. We think their zeal has not always been guided by discretion, but we cannot doubt the purity of their intentions. Their comparative want of success, we attribute not to inactivity on their parts, nor to any thing, certainly, in the genuine Gospel of Jesus Christ, but to the peculiar views which they have usually exhibited of the belief it requires, and a good deal to the practice of other professed believers in the system which the missionaries have inculcated.

There is no country in the world, excepting, perhaps, Afric's ravaged shore, to which Britain owes a larger debt of justice, than to India. That appears to our minds, no oratorical flourish, which described India as an "empire wrested in blood, from the people to whom God and nature had given it;" and its conquest leading to the establishment of "an authority which Heaven never gave, and supported by means which it can never sanction." We think the introduction of Christianity under such auspices, more calculated to make nominal than real Christians. In those minds which judge for themselves of the New Testament, it must excite a forcible contrast between Christian precept and professed Christian practice; and it may induce the natives to wish their conquerors might return home, to learn what that meaneth,—I will have mercy and not sacrifice. Rapine and slaughter are but sorry barbingers of the Prince of Peace; and the charity which covereth a multitude of sins, is not usually the concomitant of a fortress or a camp. These may consist well enough with the doctrines of Mecca's Prophet, but they are totally opposed to the religion of the Saviour of the world. Christianity we deem to be so identified with the improvement and happiness of man here, and his bliss for ever, as to be worth almost any sacrifice that can be made for its possession; but then, it must be the willing sacrifice of a freeman, not the forced contribution of a slave. Praise-worthy, therefore, as we esteem the efforts of the missionaries from Europe, yet we are of opinion, that the reformation of Hindostan must be effected, chiefly, through the instrumentality of the enlightened and religious of its own population. Their labours may be aided by others, but let them be the leaders in the holy and righteous work. Let but native individuals arise, fitted for this mighty task, by their talents and station, or by their energy and zeal, or all united, and we look forward with confidence to the result. The diffusion and exemplification of the pure and holy principles of the Gospel, may not be rapid, but they will be permanent. Our eyes may, perhaps, not witness the full harvest of righteousness which shall there be reaped; but it will be sufficient for our measure, if our hearts be gladdened by the cheering sound, that the corn is in the ear.

Such instruments for good, have, we trust, by the blessing of God, been raised up, in the persons of William

Roberts of Madras, and Rammohun Roy of Calcutta. The Edinburgh Christian Instructor, indeed, for December 1826, commences its article of review of one of the publications of the last named individual, by saying, "We do not mean to say a word, either of Rammohun Roy, or of the manner in which this paltry compilation has been got up,"—but our resolution is of a very different character, and one which, we trust, will be more acceptable and instructive to our readers. It matters little, truly, to Rammohun Roy, whether "The Christian Instructor" says "a word" or not respecting him. His character will not be affected by this "sin of omission," on the part of the Reviewer. If we mistake not, Rammohun Roy is destined to accomplish a mightier reformation than the purchase of a few church patronages, or the ousting of an Apocryphal Committee. In one way, however, this opening sentence of the Reviewer is a confirmation of our previous opinion, of the character, and talents, and virtues of the Indian Reformer. Judging from other feats of the Christian Instructor, had there been the slightest materials wherewith to weave a tale of ill against Rammohun Roy, we should not have witnessed this significant silence. So far, therefore, it is an unwilling and ungracious homage to the power of truth. Had Rammohun Roy professed his belief in Trinitarian Christianity, the Christian Instructor would not, in that case, we apprehend, have been so chary of his words. The jaundiced eye which cannot receive delight from creation's beauties, is a subject for compassion; much more so, is the mind over which prejudice has thrown its chains. If the Editor of the Christian Instructor, through some strange obliquity of mental vision, can perceive no moral loveliness in any individual not of his own faith and party—if, unmindful of the Apostle's declaration, that "God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation, he who feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him,"—he can see nothing to admire in a native of Hindostan casting away the prejudices of his education—bursting the fetters of the systems which galled his soul—employing his talents, exercising the influence which his station and his wealth place at his command—and engaging his utmost energies, in persevering attempts to erase Idolatry from the minds of his countrymen—to wash away the stain of blood from their national faith—to induce them to receive, with heartfelt gratitude, the moral laws of the Saviour—and to ac-

knowledge, with fervent thanksgiving to the Father of Lights, the Divine Mission of his beloved Son,—if, in all these exertions, the Editor can see nothing to applaud, but every thing to induce him to say not a word, because Rammohun Roy, in consequence of his serious and attentive study of the Bible, has arisen from its investigation a Christian Unitarian,—we can only say, that he has our sincerest pity.

"Rammohun Roy," observes Lieut.-Col. Fitzclarence, in his Journal of a Route across India, &c. "is, in many respects, a most extraordinary man. In the first place, he is a religious reformer, who has, amongst a people more bigoted than those of Europe in the middle ages, dared to think for himself. His learning is most extensive, as he is not only conversant with the best books in English, Arabic, Sanscrit, Bengalee, and Hindoostanee, but has even studied rhetoric in Arabic and English, and quotes Locke and Bacon on all occasions. From the view he thus takes of the religions, manners, and customs of so many nations, and from his having observed the number of different modes of worshipping the Supreme Being, he naturally turned to his own faith with an unprejudiced mind—found it perverted with the religion of the Vedas, to a gross idolatry—and was not afraid, though aware of the consequences, to publish to the world, in Bengalee and English, his feelings and opinions on the subject. Of course, he was fully prepared to meet the host of interested enemies, who, from sordid motives, wished to keep the lower classes in a state of the darkest ignorance. I have understood, that his family have quitted him; that he has been declared to have lost caste; and is, for the present, as all religious reformers must be for a time, a mark to be scoffed at."

The following testimony is from the India Gazette, published in Calcutta. "Though, hitherto, we have not, in our paper, in any detailed manner, adverted to the labours of that distinguished native, Rammohun Roy, still we have been no uninterested spectator of them. We say distinguished, because he is so among his own people, by caste, rank, and respectability; and, among all men, he must ever be distinguished for his philanthropy, his great learning, and his intellectual ascendancy in general. As a man who has cut no mean figure in the republic of letters, and in the walks of philosophical inquiry, we have a right thus publicly to mention Rammohun Roy; and it is

necessary, that we should claim this right, lest it might be deemed indelicate in us, to refer too pointedly to a person, whose great modesty, of itself is an evidence of high genius, and certainly enhances its gift. Rammohun Roy is pretty well known to the public in general, by his benevolent efforts to abolish the abominable practice of widow-burning. What effect his writings to that end may have produced, we have no certain criterion of judging. If concremation of the living has not very apparently decreased, since his works exposing the absurdity and wickedness of the practice appeared, let us not hastily infer from this, that they have not produced effect somewhere. Let us rather consider the immense field of mind, over which the seed was to be strewn, by one single unassisted hand. In a population of one hundred millions, a single individual arises, to stay, if possible, a destroying angel of darkness, that scatters misery over the land. In such a population, a hundred lives saved, in the course of a few years, would hardly be noticed, yet, what an object the saving of one life must be to the philanthropist! That Rammohun Roy's writings have been the means of saving some lives, we doubt not, for we understand that there are now many respectable natives convinced by his arguments; and it is not to be questioned, but this conviction must be beneficial—is on the increase—and must, in its increase, weaken the bonds of superstition and murderous custom, and set their captives free. For our own parts, we regret extremely that these writings were not spread forth among the people as much as possible. It is, however, impracticable for one man to give sufficient currency to them. Were a committee of wealthy natives to take the subject into consideration, much good might be effected; and we cannot help thinking, that Christian missionaries might do as much good by re-publishing and distributing the appeals against these human sacrifices, as by doling out tracts upon doctrinal and ceremonial Christianity, which the natives wont read, or, which reading, fail to move them a jot from the religion of their fathers. In addition to his efforts to put a stop to a most horrid practice, Rammohun Roy endeavoured to improve the moral condition of his countrymen, by making them acquainted with the sublime ethics of the Christian system. Whatever might have been his ideas respecting the mysteries of Christianity, with reference to its Founder and his miracles, he appears to have held only one opinion

respecting his precepts. He, and so must every one who studies them, considered them as incorporating the best system of moral law ever delivered to mankind. Accordingly, he selected out of the Sacred Books which contain his history, as it has come down to our times, the *Precepts of Jesus;* and, under that title, he presented them to his countrymen, without gloss or comment; leaving them to produce that effect, which, in the end, they must produce, on every mind not entirely and obstinately blind to the truth. The circumstance of his having thus published, for his countrymen, *the precepts alone* of Jesus Christ, drew our compiler into the vortex of a controversy, which, whatever other effects it may have caused, still farther exhibited the acuteness of his mind, the logical power of his intellect, and the unruffled good temper with which he could argue. As to Unitarian or Trinitarian questions, or other speculative points of doctrine, we have here nothing whatever to do with them. We studiously avoid giving any opinion at all on these heads, but we owe it to common sense, and the cause of truth, to declare, that the attack on Rammohun Roy really appears to us to have been about as injudicious and weak an effort of officious zeal as we ever heard of."

The author of the attack here mentioned, was, we believe, Dr. Marshman, who is now, or has lately been, in Scotland, after thirty years' absence. In our next, and, probably, successive Numbers, we shall give additional information respecting Rammohun Roy, and his various publications, with extracts from the Brahmunical Magazine, showing the manner in which Trinitarian missionaries are replied to by their Hindoo opponents; and shall generally state the prospect of the establishment of Christianity in India.

On the close of the Year.

Written on the night of December 31, 1826.

And art thou gone on rapid wing?
And must we now thy requiem sing?
But late, we, joyous, hail'd thy birth,
With dance, and song, and festal mirth;
And, art thou now to pass away,
Unhymn'd by one poor parting lay?
And shall we to thy rival turn,
Nor hang one wreath upon thy urn?

No! though pallid may be the flowers,
Chill as the breath of thy dying hours;
And, though the lay be faint and weak,
As notes from leafless bowers that break,
A timid hand would fain essay,
To thee, these parting rites to pay.

When Hope, with smiles for ever bright,
First gave thee to our longing sight,
She o'er thee cast her roseate veil,
Hiding from us thy features pale;
And sweetly whispering promis'd joys,
Bade us in thy young light rejoice.
For thou, unlike the by-gone years,
Wouldst pleasure give, undimm'd by tears:
And we, though oft before deceiv'd,
Almost her syren tales believ'd.
And shall we blame thee, if again
We find those erring hopes were vain!
Or lightly deem of days of joy,
Not quite unmingled with alloy?
Or murmur that thy life has been,
An ever-varying chequer'd scene?
Nor, ere we give the last farewell,
A moment on thy memory dwell?—

Though the fondest ties by thee have been riven,
And the mourner's heart to madness driven;
Though the hoary head hath in dust been laid,
And the eye just op'd, hath clos'd in shade;
Though manhood's vigour hath sunk to rest,
And the sod lies cold on the mother's breast;
Though budding flowers have been nipp'd in their bloom,
And genius hath found its early tomb;
Though the prince hath left his glittering crown,
And laid his head with the peasant down;
Though the treasure of wealth its grasp hath fled,
And misfortune o'er some its gloom hath shed:
Yet not to ALL hast thou sorrow brought;
Thou hast bound the chain that love had wrought;
The wanderer has come to his native isle;
The mother hath hail'd her first-born's smile;
The patriot's deed has been crown'd with glory,
And his name enroll'd in living story.
Of woe thou hast rais'd the drooping head,
And fortune's favours on virtue shed;

Thou hast heard the lover's whisper'd vow,
And wreath'd the young bride's blushing brow;
And its laurel crown hath genius won,
And its godlike task hath mercy done.
And many a hope hast thou fulfill'd,
And many an anxious fear dispell'd;
Thy days to some have been all bright,
With flitting cloud, and shadow light:
Or, if they wept in a darker hour,
'Twas transient as an April shower.

Ah! happy, if the closing year
Hath cost us but the passing tear,
Nor o'er our souls a shadow cast,
Through many a coming day to last:
If in the social circle sweet,
Our eye can still delighted meet
The beaming glance, that fondly tells
The love in each warm heart that dwells;
If love's dear bonds still firm remain,
And all unbroke is friendship's chain;
If smiling peace our home illume,
And health's sweet roses round it bloom.
Though fleeting has prov'd our heart's gay dream,
As rainbow's arch, or meteor's gleam;
Though worldly hopes our touch have fled,
And wish'd-for joys prov'd faint and dead;
Though care and woe have been thy lot,
Child of the dust! ah! murmur not;
But thanks, for the sweet flowerets, breathe,
That twin'd them with the cypress wreath.

Not ever thus, shall lightly pass
Each coming year; our hearts, alas!
Must yet by grief's keen pang be torn,
Our spirits oft in anguish mourn;
And we must prove the emptiness
Of all this world can give, to bless,
Or e'er our chasten'd hearts shall own
There's peace and joy in heaven alone.
And oh! as every added year,
Brings us that haven of rest more near;
Attentive may we mark their flight,
And grateful hail their opening light;
And still may each that's to us given,
Leave us with hearts more meet for heaven. Y.

THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

GLASGOW, *January* 13, 1827.

OUR readers will see that we have given twelve additional pages to this Number. We have done so, in order to keep pace with the variety of interesting matter which is crowding upon us, as also, to finish the paper on Scriptural Arguments for Unitarianism, and to conclude, in our next Number, the Review of Milton. We shall be glad, if the sale of the Magazine would justify us in increasing the size of it to forty-eight pages. If every present subscriber would endeavour to procure one more, and we know that in many instances this might readily be done, such increased subscription would encourage us to do so. We shall, for the future, publish the Christian Pioneer on the *first day of every Month*, so that our friends in England will be able to procure their copies along with the other periodical works.

IN our last Number, we noticed the indefatigable exertions of the Rev. J. Wright of Alnwick, and the encouraging success which had already attended his labours. His efforts have roused a host of opponents; amongst whom, one of the sons of Cambridge, cuts a conspicuous, but, we think, rather a sorry figure. We give his curious Advertisement entire, with the admirable reply it has called forth. The thanks of the Unitarians are due to Mr. Procter, for the service he has thus rendered to their cause.

"This day is Published, price 6*d*. dedicated with permission to his Grace the Duke of Northumberland, a Defence of the Orthodox Faith, (against the attacks of Anti-Trinitarian Infidelity,) as contained in the Appendix to Five Discourses, &c. By the Rev. William Procter, Jun. M. A. Fellow of Catharine Hall, Cambridge, and Lecturer of Berwick. Edinburgh: printed by James Ballantyne & Company, and sold by the Booksellers in Alnwick.

"The author is induced to offer to the public, the remaining copies of this Defence of the Orthodox Faith, at considerably below the price they cost him for paper and printing, in the hope of thereby promoting its circulation amongst that class of readers, who are most liable to be misled by the arts of the Deceiver. He is aware that it is not written in what is termed a popular style, nor can be expected to profit any but those who love TRUTH sufficiently to imitate the noble example of the BEREANS, and *search the SCRIPTURES daily whether these things be so*. To such as have sufficient Faith to *pray heartily* for the guidance of the Spirit of Truth, and are not too indolent to turn to the places in the Bible

which are pointed out in this Publication, it may prove a useful Manual. If it be the means of bringing back to Christ, *our Lord and our God*, John xx. 28, one wanderer from his fold, or of inducing one parent, master, or mistress, to restrain a child, an apprentice, or a servant, from attending the nocturnal Orgies of Spiritual Intoxication and Adultery, the prayers of its Author will be answered, and his labour and expense will not have been bestowed in vain.—*Longhoughton, Dec.* 22, 1826."

To the Inhabitants of Alnwick and the Neighbourhood.

CHRISTIAN FRIENDS,

I FEEL myself called upon at present to address you in this manner; and I trust you will at least approve of my motives, if you cannot embrace my sentiments.

Having lately entered upon the ministerial charge of the Unitarian Congregation at Alnwick, and firmly believing the principles we profess, "to be the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ,"—I should be deficient in my duty if I did not endeavour to propagate these doctrines. For this purpose, I have confined myself chiefly in the evening discourses to an illustration of our principles. I have more than once declared, that my great object was, to lay the truth before you in a plain and simple manner, so that ye might be enabled to judge for yourselves. It is not my duty, neither do I consider it consistent with the character of a Christian minister, to condemn any man for his opinions: "to our own master we must stand or fall." But it is the duty of every minister of Christ, to illustrate and insist upon what he believes to be the Revelation of Heaven, and to endeavour by the weapons of the spirit alone, to bring all men to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. This has hitherto been, and, I trust, will always be my object; and if argument and the authority of Scripture cannot prevail, we have no right to proceed by any other means. But "I love not man the less," though he differs from me in opinion. To all "who do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before God," I can extend the right hand of fellowship, however much we may differ on other points. Indeed, I value opinions only so far as they are likely to be productive of that holiness of heart and life, which was and is the grand object of the Gospel dispensation. And it is because I believe the Unitarian doctrines to be the Alpha and Omega of Christianity—to be well calculated for promoting love to God and benevolence to man—that I so warmly and so anxiously endeavour to promote them. This has been the great object in the evening lectures, which seems to have produced something like a general convulsion. From almost every pulpit, the Unitarian is now branded as an infidel and a blasphemer—and the press is now employed to extend and perpetuate the obnoxious titles of "*seducer, deceiver, and sophist.*" But I may almost assure these *Reverend* Declaimers, that all their efforts to stigmatize shall be in vain. The lectures on Unitarianism which have already been delivered, have considerably changed the opinions of many. There are but few in this town, who will now declare that Unitarians are Deists in

disguise, that their object is one and the same with the unbeliever, to overthrow the Gospel of salvation,—there are but few who will now declare, that they deny Jesus Christ to be their Lord and their Saviour. It is true, they do not believe Jesus Christ to be the very and eternal God, who created heaven and earth. This is not the doctrine of Scripture, and therefore they do not believe it. And it is their desire, that those who believe this doctrine would show where it is declared. It is not for the believer in the eternal Godhead of Christ, to prove the divinity of his mission or to insist upon the miracles which he wrought. These are principles which the Unitarian believes as firmly as the Trinitarian. It belongs to our opponents, to prove that Jesus Christ was of himself Almighty God, that he was and is a self-existent and independent being, underived, and unbegotten, that all the powers which he possessed, and all the wisdom and authority with which he taught, were not derived from the Almighty Father,—but belonged to himself. If our opponents can prove this, then they may rail against us. Let not human creeds, articles, and confessions of faith, usurp the place of the Word of God. Let "the Bible, the Bible only," be the standard, and then, alas! for this reputed Orthodoxy!—A defence of the Orthodox faith may be published daily, but if it wants the authority of Scripture, it will avail nothing.

The Author of "a Defence of the Orthodox Faith against the attacks of Anti-Trinitarian *Infidelity,"* has made another effort to bring his work into repute. In order to do this, it appears necessary, that he should have noticed and overturned that very spirited reply, by which it formerly received a deadly wound, and which, I doubt, he finds himself unable to heal. But this second attempt shows, that the Orthodox defender of the faith, has *quantum sufficit* of that *faith*, by which, in the ages of darkness, the presuming priesthood triumphed in the prostration of every faculty which distinguishes man from the brute creation. With this faith, however, he has also some share of benevolence, "*and now offers to the public, the remaining copies of his work, considerably below the price they cost him for paper and printing, in the hope of thereby promoting its circulation amongst that class of readers, who are most liable to be misled by the arts of the deceiver.*" Gentle readers, what benevolence! you are offered a wounded and mutilated work, at considerably below the value of the materials of which it is composed. No remuneration sought for that wonderful labour, with which the superstructure was reared. All this is gratuitously given, in the hope, that you will have gratitude enough to read and believe, that all Unitarian works are imposition and deception!

But, if one may judge from this new intimation respecting the work, its Author is a complete *master of the arts;* for he puts forth the old friend as with a new face, says nothing of the many bruises he has received, and seems to impress upon the public, the idea, that this Goliath has all along been challenging the armies of Israel, without meeting with the least opposition. The Philistines of old, were not so self-conceited; nay, not so blindfolded as to raise again their wounded and overthrown giant, in hopes that he would achieve a new conquest. But, perhaps, the Author

thinks it better to make a sacrifice of the old champion, than let him lie covered with dust to feed the worms. What astonishing liberality!—what a sacrifice, in order "*to induce parents, masters, and mistresses, to restrain their children, apprentices, and servants, from attending the nocturnal orgies of spiritual intoxication and adultery!!!*" Such are the objects which this wonderful defender of the Orthodox faith has in view by this sacrifice, to impose restraints upon the free exercise of the mind in matters of religion, to check the spirit of free inquiry, and to stigmatize the Unitarian with the most opprobrious epithets.

People may be called upon to use compulsion, in matters of faith; but, in the present age, men know their dignity and their duty too well, to listen to any such dictator. The priest who shall now produce anathema for argument, and railing for reason, is more likely to be laughed at than listened to; the days of fire and faggot are long gone past, and the free inquirer can dread no danger in this land of liberty. Let the defenders of Orthodoxy use scurrilous language if they choose. If they are fond of such low and grovelling expressions, let them designate the lectures on Unitarianism, "the frantic revels of spiritual intoxication and adultery!" Yet, it sometimes happens, that the observation of a madman may prove a lesson to the fancied sage; and therefore, I would advise all declaimers to recollect, that masters and mistresses are the sons and daughters of freedom—and that this is now the nineteenth century, and that even the school-boy will spurn at the idea of compulsion in matters of religion. If that is all the argument which can be offered in behalf of Orthodoxy, it is one which has long been descending to the grave, and by the wise enactments of our legislature, has been for ever consigned to the tomb. And woe to the man who shall now be found endeavouring to resuscitate the unholy monster.

Is it in this land of freedom, that those who call themselves reformed and Protestant Ministers, are calling upon masters and mistresses to *restrain* their servants from following the dictates of conscience in matters of eternal moment? Surely there is some craft in danger, where such arguments must be used—surely there is some Diana whose magnificence shall be neglected—surely there are some silver shrine-makers, who dread the free exercise of reason in matters of religion, as a sure and certain presage of diminution in their wealth and greatness. Therefore, ye masters and mistresses, put a restraint upon your servants; surround them immediately with the chains of spiritual bondage; rivet more strongly the bolts of superstition, so that the people may be deterred from thinking for themselves!

The same spirit of raising the *hue* and *cry*, has manifested itself in every age of the world, and in every period of the church. Reformers have always been dreaded by the parties in power; and instead of their arguments being opposed by reason and Scripture, it has been too common for the defenders of Orthodoxy, to declare against their characters, misinterpret their motives, and thus, if possible, to raise the unhallowed cry of "Away with him, away with him—crucify him, crucify him!" This spirit has for some

years past been strongly manifested against that class of Christians called Unitarians. They have been branded with every epithet which was thought would make them appear odious and detestable; and their slanderers, wrapping themselves up in self-security, have vainly boasted, that nothing was to be dreaded from what they were pleased to call such awful doctrines. But though the march of truth may, for a time, be silent and unperceived—though she may, for a time, be unaccompanied with the trumpet of worldly fame—though malignity should shoot against her the envenomed darts—yet truth receives no injury—she is immortal, and can never die.

The contest between truth and error, appears now to be approaching the proper test, and there can be no doubt respecting victory being declared in favour of the former. The advocates of all parties begin to perceive, that it will not do to warn people against reading and thinking for themselves. They are aware, that man is pressing forward to the goal of perfection—that he is now determined to satisfy his mind respecting matters of eternal moment. He now searches the Scriptures of truth, without any regard to priest, creed, or confession of faith. I rejoice to think that the Bible is now becoming the standard of Christianity, and that nothing but what is therein clearly taught, shall be considered as essential to salvation. Yes, I rejoice to learn, my Christian friends, that since the commencement of my ministerial labours in this town, the Scriptures are more generally perused, and the doctrines they contain more minutely examined. Continue these investigations, and if you find it declared in Scripture, that there are "Three Persons in the Godhead"—if you find it there revealed that "the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty, and the Holy Ghost Almighty," then, but not till then, would I have you to believe it. If you are there exhorted to pray to "God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost," then follow the injunction. If you are there exhorted to say "By thine agony and bloody sweat; by thy cross and passion; by thy precious death and burial—Good Lord deliver us," then, but not till then, would I have you to use such language.

Let me now only seriously call upon all Christians to take nothing for granted upon such a momentous question. Recollect, my Christian friends, that all creeds and confessions of faith are only the works of fallible men, that the Bible is the only proper standard of faith, and that it is by reading the Bible, comparing one passage with another, and one chapter with another, that we are most likely to arrive at truth. Let us attend particularly to the discourses and the exhortations of Jesus Christ. Let us always worship as he hath taught us, and let us always pray as he directed, and ever enforced by his own example; and then we shall be Christians, not in name and profession only, but in sincerity and truth, and shall be enabled to say with the Apostle, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

Alnwick, 30*th Dec.* 1826. JOHN WRIGHT.

THE

CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

No. 6. FEBRUARY, 1827. Vol. I.

Milton's Treatise on Christian Doctrine.

(Concluded from page 161.)

WE come now to a topic, on which Milton will probably startle a majority of readers. He is totally opposed, as were most of the ancient philosophers, to the doctrine of God's creating the universe out of nothing. He maintains, that there can be no action without a passive material on which the act is exerted, and that, accordingly, the world was framed out of a pre-existent matter. To the question, what and whence is this primary matter? he answers, it is from God, "an efflux of the Deity." "It proceeded from God," and, consequently, no additional existence was produced by creation, nor is matter capable of annihilation. A specimen of his speculations on this subject, is given in the following quotation.

"It is clear, then, that the world was framed out of matter of some kind or other. For since action and passion are relative terms, and since, consequently, no agent can act externally, unless there be some patient, such as matter, it appears impossible that God could have created this world out of nothing; not from any defect of power on his part, but because it was necessary that something should have previously existed, capable of receiving passively the exertion of the divine efficacy. Since, therefore, both Scripture and reason concur in pronouncing, that all these things were made, not out of nothing, but out of matter, it necessarily follows, that matter must either have always existed independently of God, or have originated from God at some particular point of time. That matter should have been always independent of God, (seeing that it is only a passive principle, dependent on the Deity, and subservient to him; and seeing, moreover, that as in number, considered abstractly, so also in time or eternity, there is no inherent force or efficacy,) that matter, I say, should have existed of itself from all eternity, is inconceivable. If, on the contrary, it did not exist from all eternity, it is difficult to understand from whence it

derives its origin. There remains, therefore, but one solution of the difficulty, for which, moreover, we have the authority of Scripture, namely, that all things are of God." Vol. I. p. 236, 237.

This doctrine naturally led Milton to another, viz. that there is no ground for the supposed distinction between body and soul; for if matter is an "efflux of the Deity," it is plainly susceptible of intellectual functions. Accordingly, our author affirms,

"That man is a living being, intrinsically and properly one and individual, not compound or separable, not, according to the common opinion, made up and framed of two distinct and different natures, as of soul and body,—but the whole man is soul, and the soul man, that is to say, a body or substance individual, animated, sensitive, and rational." Vol. I. p. 250, 251.

We here learn that a passage in Paradise Lost, which we have admired as poetry, was deemed by Milton sound philosophy.

> "O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom
> All things proceed, and up to him return,
> If not deprav'd from good, created all
> Such to perfection, *one first matter all*,
> Indued with various forms, various degrees
> Of substance, and in things that live, of life;
> But more refin'd, more spiritous, and pure,
> As nearer to him placed, or nearer tending
> Each in their several active spheres assigned,
> *Till body up to spirit work*, in bounds
> Proportion'd to each kind. So from the root,
> Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves
> More aery, last the bright consummate flower
> Spirits odorous breathes; flowers and their fruit,
> Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublimed,
> To vital spirits aspire, to animal,
> To INTELLECTUAL.—*Paradise Lost*, *b. v. lines* 469—485.

These speculations of Milton, will be received in this age, with more favour or with less aversion than in his own; for, from the time of Locke, the discussions of philosophers have tended to unsettle our notions of matter, and no man is hardy enough now to say, what it is, or what it may not be. The idealism of Berkeley, though it has never organized a sect, has yet sensibly influenced the modes of thinking among metaphysicians; and the coincidence of this system with the theory of certain Hindoo philosophers, may lead us to suspect, that it contains some great latent truth, of which the European and

Hindoo intellect, so generally at variance, have caught a glimpse. Matter is indeed a Proteus, which escapes us at the moment we hope to seize it. Priestley was anxious to make the soul material; but for this purpose, he was obliged to change matter from a substance into a power, that is, into no matter at all; so that he destroyed, in attempting to diffuse it. We have thrown out these remarks, to rescue Milton's memory from the imputation, which he was the last man to deserve, of irreverence towards God; for of this some will deem him guilty, in tracing matter to the Deity as its fountain. Matter, which seems to common people so intelligible, is still wrapped in mystery. We know it only by its relation to mind, or as an assemblage of powers to awaken certain sensations. Of its relation to God, we may be said to know nothing. Perhaps, as knowledge advances, we shall discover, that the Creator is bound to his works by stronger and more intimate ties, than we now imagine. We do not, then, quarrel with such suggestions as Milton's, though we cannot but wonder at the earnestness with which he follows out such doubtful speculations.

Milton next proceeds to the consideration of man's state in Paradise; and as marriage was the only social relation then subsisting, he introduces here his views of that institution, and of polygamy, and divorce. These views show, if not the soundness, yet the characteristic independence of his mind. No part of his book has given such offence as his doctrine of the lawfulness of polygamy, and yet, no where is he less liable to reproach. It is plain, that his error was founded on his reverence for Scripture. He saw that polygamy was allowed to the best men in the Old Testament, to patriarchs before the law, who, he says, were the objects of God's special favour, and to eminent individuals in subsequent ages; and finding no prohibition of it in the New Testament, he believed, that not only holy men would be traduced, but Scripture dishonoured, by pronouncing it morally evil. We are aware, that some will say, that the practice *is* condemned in the New Testament; and we grant, that it is censured by implication in these words of Christ, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery."* But, we believe it to be an indis-

* Matt. xix. 9.

putable fact, that although Christianity was first preached in Asia, which had been from the earliest ages the seat of polygamy, the Apostles never denounced it as a crime, and never required their converts to put away all wives but one. What then? some may say, are you, too, the advocates of the lawfulness of polygamy? We answer, No. We consider our religion as decidedly hostile to this practice; and we add, what seems to us of great importance, that this hostility is not the less decided, because no express prohibition of polygamy is found in the New Testament; for Christianity is not a system of precise legislation, marking out with literal exactness every thing to be done, and every thing to be avoided; but an inculcation of broad principles, which it intrusts to individuals and to society, to be applied according to their best discretion. It is through this generous peculiarity, that Christianity is fitted to be a universal religion. Through this, it can subsist and blend itself with all stages of society, and can live in the midst of abuses, which it silently and powerfully overcomes, but against which it would avail little, were it immediately to lift up the voice of denunciation. We all know, that long cherished corruptions, which have sent their roots through the whole frame of a community, cannot be torn up at once, without dissolving society. To Christianity is committed the sublime office of eradicating all the errors and evils of the world; but this it does by a process corresponding with man's nature, by working a gradual revolution in the mind, which in its turn, works a safe and effectual revolution in manners and life. No argument, therefore, in favour of a practice, can be adduced from the fact, that it is not explicitly reprobated in the New Testament. For example, Christianity went forth into communities, where multitudes were held in slavery, and all ranks were ground and oppressed by despotism; abuses on which the spirit of our religion frowns as sternly as on any which can be named. Yet, Christianity did not command the master to free his slaves, or the despot to descend from his absolute throne; but satisfied itself with proclaiming sublime truths, in regard to God's paternal character and administration, and broad and generous principles of action; leaving to these the work of breaking every chain by a gradual, inward, irresistible influence, and of asserting the essential equality, and unalienable rights of the whole human race. We can-

not leave this topic, without adding, that not only Milton's error on polygamy, but many other noxious mistakes, have resulted from measuring Christianity by the condition of the primitive church; as if *that* were the standard of faith and practice; as if every thing allowed then were wise and good; as if the religion were then unfolded in all its power and extent. The truth is, that Christianity was then in its infancy. The Apostles communicated its great truths to the rude minds of Jews and Heathens; but the primitive church did not, and could not, understand all that was involved in those principles, all the applications of which they are susceptible, all the influences they were to exert on the human mind, all the combinations they were to form with the new truths, which time was to unfold, all the new lights in which they were to be placed, all the adaptations to human nature, and to more advanced states of society, which they were progressively to manifest. In the first age, the religion was administered with a wise and merciful conformity to the capacities of its recipients. With the progress of intelligence, and the developement of the moral faculties, Christianity is freeing itself, and ought to be freed, from the local, temporary, and accidental associations of its childhood. Its great principles are coming forth more distinctly and brightly, and condemning abuses and errors, which have passed current for ages. This great truth, for such we deem it, that Christianity is a growing light, and that it must be more or less expounded by every age for itself, was not sufficiently apprehended by Milton; nor is it now understood as it will be. For want of apprehending it, Christianity is administered now too much as it was in ages, when nothing of our literature, philosophy, and spirit of improvement existed; and, consequently, it does not, we fear, exert that entire and supreme sway over strong and cultivated minds, which is its due, and which it must one day obtain.

Milton has connected with polygamy the subject of divorce, on which he is known to have differed from many Christians. He strenuously maintains, in the work under review, and more largely in other treatises, that the violation of the marriage bed is not the sole ground of divorce, but that "the perpetual interruption of peace and affection, by mutual differences and unkindness, is a sufficient reason" for dissolving the conjugal relation. On this topic we cannot enlarge.

We now arrive at that part of Milton's work, in which his powerful mind might have been expected to look beyond the prevalent opinions of his day; but in which he has followed the beaten road, almost without deviation, seldom noticing difficulties, and hardly seeming to know their existence. We refer to the great subjects of the moral condition of mankind, and of redemption by Jesus Christ. The doctrine of original sin he has assumed as true, and his faith in it was evidently strengthened by his doctrine of the identity of the soul with the body, in consequence of which he teaches, that souls are propagated from parents to children, and not immediately derived from God, and that they are born with an hereditary taint, just as the body contracts hereditary disease. It is humiliating to add, that he supports this doctrine of the propagation of sin by physical contagion, on the ground, that it relieves the Creator from the charge of originating the corruption which we are said to bring into life; as if the infinitely pure and good God could, by a covert agency, infect with moral evil, the passive and powerless mind of the infant, and then absolve himself of the horrible work, by imputing it to instruments of his own ordination! Milton does not, however, believe in total depravity, feeling that this would free men from guilt, by taking away all power; and he, therefore, leaves us a portion of the divine image, not enough to give us a chance of virtue, but enough to take away excuse from sin. Such are the "tender mercies" of theology! With respect to Christ's mediation, he supposes, that Christ saves us by bearing our punishment, and in this way satisfying God's justice. His views, indeed, are not expressed with much precision, and seem to have been formed without much investigation. On these great subjects, of human nature and redemption, we confess, we are disappointed in finding the spirit of Milton satisfying itself with the degrading notions which prevailed around him. But we remember, that it is the order of Providence, that the greatest minds should sympathize much with their age, and that they contribute the more to the progress of mankind, by not advancing too fast and too far beyond their cotemporaries. In this part of his work, Milton maintains, that the death threatened to sin, extends equally to body and soul, which indeed he was bound to do, as he holds the soul and body to be one; and he then proceeds to defend with his usual power, the

necessary inference, that all consciousness is suspended between death and the resurrection. We have no faith in this doctrine, but we respect the courage with which he admits and maintains, whatever can be fairly deduced from his opinions.

Having concluded the subject of redemption, he passes to what he calls "man's renovation, or the change whereby the sinner is brought into a state of grace;" and here, though he is not always perspicuous, yet he seldom deviates from what was then the beaten road. We owe it, however, to Milton, to say, that although he sometimes approached, he never adopted Calvinism. All the distinguishing articles of that creed, total depravity, election and reprobation, Christ's dying for the elect only, irresistible grace, the perseverance of the saints, and justification by mere faith, all are denied and opposed by him, and some with great strength. Swayed as Milton was by the age in which he lived, his spirit could not be subdued to the heart-withering faith of the Genevan school.

We now come to a subject, in which Milton was deeply interested, we mean Christian Liberty, under which head may be included the discipline of the church, the power of ministers, and the rights of the people. To vindicate the liberty of Christians, and to secure them from all outward impositions and ordinances, he maintains that the whole Mosaic law is abolished, so that no part is binding on Christians; a doctrine which may startle many, who believe that the moral precepts of that law, are as binding now as ever. But such persons differ little in reality from Milton, whose true meaning is, that these precepts bind Christians, not through the authority of Moses, which is wholly done away, but only because they are taken up and incorporated into Christianity, which is our only law, and which has set forth whatever was permanently valuable in Judaism, in a more perfect form and with more powerful sanctions.

As another branch of the Liberty of Christians, he maintains, as we may well suppose, the right of every believer to consult the Scriptures, and to judge of them for himself. Not satisfied with this, he takes the ground of Quakerism, and maintains that the Christian, in addition to the Scriptures, has an inward guide, with which no human authority should interfere.

"Under the Gospel, we possess, as it were, a twofold

Scripture, one external, which is the written word, and the other internal, which is the Holy Spirit, written in the hearts of believers, according to the promise of God, and with the intent that it should by no means be neglected." Vol. 2. p. 172. "The external Scripture * * * has been liable to frequent corruption, and in some instances has been corrupted, through the number, and occasionally the bad faith of those by whom it has been handed down, the variety and discrepancy of the original manuscripts, and the additional diversity produced by subsequent transcripts and printed editions. But the Spirit which leads to truth cannot be corrupted; neither is it easy to deceive a man who is really spiritual." p. 173. "It is difficult to conjecture the purpose of Providence in committing the writings of the New Testament to such uncertain and variable guardianship, unless it were to teach us by this very circumstance, that the Spirit which is given to us, is a more certain guide than Scripture, whom, therefore, it is our duty to follow." p. 174. "Hence it follows, that when an acquiescence in human opinions, or an obedience to human authority in matters of religion is exacted, in the name either of the church or of the Christian magistrate, from those who are themselves led individually by the Spirit of God, this is in effect to impose a yoke, not on man, but on the Holy Spirit itself." p. 176.

This, in words, is genuine Quakerism; but whether Milton understood by the Holy Spirit that *immediate* revelation, which forms the leading doctrine of that creed, we doubt. To this doctrine it may be objected, and we think Milton must have felt the objection, that it disparages and discourages our faculties, and produces inaction of mind, leading men to expect from a sudden flash from heaven, the truth which we are taught to seek by the right use of our own powers. We imagine, that Milton believed that the Holy Spirit works with and by our own understandings, and, instead of superseding reason, invigorates and extends it. But this is not the only place, where his precise views are obscured by general expressions, or by rapid and superficial notices of subjects.

In Milton's views of the church and the ministry, we have other proofs of his construing the Scriptures in the manner most favourable to Christian Liberty. He teaches that the universal Church has no head but Christ, and

that the power arrogated by popes, councils, and bishops, is gross usurpation. In regard to particular churches, he is a strict congregationalist. Each church, he says, is competent to its own government, and connected with others only by the bond of charity. No others are authorised to interfere with any of its concerns, but in the way of brotherly counsel.

"Every church consisting of the above parts," (i. e. well instructed believers,) "however small its numbers, is to be considered as in itself an integral and perfect church, so far as regards its religious rights; nor has it any superior on earth, whether individual, or assembly, or convention, to whom it can be lawfully required to render submission; inasmuch as no believer out of its pale, nor any order or council of men whatever, has a greater right than itself to expect a participation in the written word and the promises, in the presence of Christ, in the presiding influence of the Spirit, and in those gracious gifts which are the reward of united prayer."—Vol. II. p. 193.

The choice of the minister, he says, belongs to the people. The minister, if possible, should serve the church gratuitously, and live by the labour of his own hands. This unpaid service he pronounces more noble and consonant to our Lord's example and that of the Apostles. In accordance with these views, he favours the idea of a church consisting of few members.

"All that pertains to the worship of God and the salvation of believers, all, in short, that is necessary to constitute a church, may be duly and orderly transacted in a particular church, within the walls of a private house, and where the numbers assembled are inconsiderable. Nay, such a church, when, in compliance with the interested views of its pastor, it allows of an increase of numbers beyond what is convenient, deprives itself in a great measure of the advantages to be derived from meeting in common."—Vol. II. p. 194.

He maintains that ministers are not to monopolize public instruction, or the administration of the ordinances; but that all Christians, having sufficient gifts, are to participate in these services.

"The custom of holding assemblies is to be maintained, not after the present mode, but according to the apostolical institution, which did not ordain that an individual, and he a stipendiary, should have the sole right of speaking

from a higher place, but that each believer in turn should be authorised to speak, or prophecy, or teach, or exhort, according to his gifts; insomuch that even the weakest among the brethren had the privilege of asking questions, and consulting the elders and more experienced members of the congregation."—Vol. II. p. 203. "Any believer is competent to act as an *ordinary minister*, according as convenience may require, provided only he be endowed with the necessary gifts; these gifts constituting his mission."—p. 153. "If therefore it be competent to any believer whatever to preach the gospel, provided he be furnished with the requisite gifts, it is also competent to him to administer the rite of baptism; inasmuch as the latter office is inferior to the former."—p. 157. With regard to the Lord's supper also, it has been shown, in the preceding chapter, that all are entitled to participate in that rite, but that the privilege of dispensing the elements is confined to no particular man, or order of men."—p. 158.

We entirely accord with the spirit of freedom which these passages breathe; but from some of the particular views we dissent. The great error of Milton lies in supposing that the primitive church was meant to be a model for all ages. But can we suppose, that the church at its birth, when it was poor, persecuted, hemmed in by Judaism and Heathenism, supplied imperfectly with written rules and records, dependent for instruction chiefly on inspired teachers, and composed of converts who had grown up and been steeped in Jewish and Heathen errors, can we imagine, that in these circumstances the church took a form which it ought to retain as sacred and unalterable, in its triumphs, and prosperity, and diffusion, and in ages of greater light and refinement? We know that in the first ages that there were no ministers with salaries, or edifices for public worship. Christians met in private houses, and sometimes in the obscurest they could find. On these occasions, the services were not monopolized by an individual, but shared by the fraternity; nor is there a hint in the New Testament that the administration of the Lord's Supper and Baptism was confined to the minister. But in all this we have no rule for the present day. Indeed it seems to us utterly repugnant to the idea of a universal religion, intended for all ages and nations, and for all the progressive states of society to the end of the world, to suppose that in its infancy it established an order of wor-

ship, instruction, and discipline, which was to remain inviolable in all future times. This doctrine of an inflexible form, seems to us servile, superstitious, and disparaging to Christianity. Our religion is too spiritual and inward, and cares too little about its exterior, to bind itself in this everlasting chain. The acknowledged indefiniteness of the New Testament in regard to this subject, is no mean proof of the enlarged and prospective wisdom of its founder. We believe, that with the diffusion of liberal views, the question will arise, whether our religion cannot be taught and administered in methods and forms more adapted, than those which now prevail, to its spirit and great design, to the principles of human nature, and to the condition and wants of society. Among the changes which may grow from this discussion, we do not anticipate the adoption of Milton's plan of sentencing ministers to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow; for we think that we see reasons in the general spread of knowledge, for enlarging their means and opportunities of study and intellectual culture, that they may meet the increasing demand for more enlightened inculcation of Christian truth. At the same time, it seems to us not unlikely, that, in conformity to Milton's suggestion, public instruction, instead of continuing to be a monopoly of ministers, may be extended freely to men of superior intelligence and piety, and that the results of this arrangement may be, the infusion of new life, power, and practical wisdom into religious teaching, and the substitution of a more natural, free, and various eloquence, for the technical and monotonous mode of treating subjects, which clings so often and so obstinately to the performances of the pulpit.—Again, we do not expect, among the changes of forms and outward worship, that Christians, to meet our author's views, will shut their churches and meet in private houses; for large religious edifices, and large congregations, seem to us among the important means of collecting and interesting in Christianity the mass of the community. But perhaps narrower associations for religious improvement may be formed, in which the formalities of public worship will be relaxed, and Christians may reap the benefits of the more familiar and confidential meetings of the primitive converts. It is indeed a great question, how the public administration of Christianity, including modes of discipline, instruction, and worship, may be rendered more impressive and effectual.

This field is almost untrodden: but if we read aright of the signs of the times, the day for exploring it draws nigh.

We have said, that whilst we dissent from some of Milton's views on the subject of our present remarks, we agree in their spirit. It was evidently the aim of all his suggestions, to strip the clergy, as they are called, of that peculiar, artificial sanctity, with which superstition had long arrayed them, and which had made their simple, benignant office, one of the worst instruments of ambition and despotism. We believe, that this institution will never exert its true and full power on the church and on the world, until the childish awe with which it has been viewed, shall be exchanged for enlightened esteem, and until men, instead of expecting from it certain mysterious, undefined influences, shall see in it a rational provision for conveying important truth, and for promoting virtue and happiness, not by magic, but according to the fixed laws of human nature.

The remainder of the "Treatise on Christian Doctrine," furnishes topics on which we should willingly remark; but we have only time to glance at the opinions in which Milton differs from the majority. He rejects infant baptism, and argues against it with his usual earnestness and strength. He not only affirms, with many other Christians, that the fourth commandment relating to the Sabbath, is abolished with the rest of the Mosaic system, but maintains, what few have done, that, under the Gospel, no time is appointed for public worship; but that the observance of the first day of the week, rests wholly on expediency, and on the agreement of Christians. He believes, that Christ is to appear visibly for the judgment of the world, and that he will reign a thousand years on earth, at the end of which period Satan will assail the church with an innumerable confederacy, and be overwhelmed with everlasting ruin. He speaks of the judgment as beginning with Christ's second advent, and as comprehending his whole government through the millenium, as well as the closing scene, when sentence will be pronounced on evil angels, and on the whole human race. We have now given, we believe, all the peculiarities of Milton's faith. As for that large part of his work, in which he has accumulated scriptural proofs of doctrines and duties in which all Christians are agreed, its general tenor may be understood without farther remarks.

It may now be asked, what is the value of this book? We prize it chiefly as a testimony to Milton's profound reverence for the Christian religion, and as an assertion of the freedom and rights of the mind. We are obliged to say, that the work throws little new light on the great subjects of which it treats. Some will say, that this ought not to surprise us; for new light is not to be looked for in the department of theology. But if this be true, our religion may be charged with the want of adaptation to our nature in an essential point; for one of the most striking features in the human mind, is its thirst for constantly enlarging knowledge, and its proneness to lose its interest in subjects which it has exhausted. The chief cause of Milton's failure was, that he sought truth too exclusively in the past, and among the dead. He indeed called no man master, and disclaimed the authority of Fathers, and was evidently dissatisfied with all the sects which had preceded or were spread around him. Still he believed in the perfection of the primitive church, and that Christianity, instead of being carried forward, was to be carried *back* to its original purity. To use his own striking language, "the lovely form of truth," which Christians at first embraced, "had been hewn into a thousand pieces, like the mangled body of Osiris, and scattered to the four winds;" and consequently he believed, that the great duty of her friends, was "to gather up limb by limb, and bring together every joint and member." In conformity with this doctrine, he acted too much as an eclectic theologian, culling something from almost every sect, and endeavouring to form an harmonious system from materials "gathered from the four winds." He would have done better, had he sought truth less in other minds, and more in the communion of his own soul with Scripture, nature, God, and itself. The fact is, that the church, from its beginning, has been imperfect in knowledge and practice, and our business is, not to rest in the past, but to use it as a means of a purer and brighter futurity. Christianity began to be corrupted at its birth, to be debased by earthly mixtures, as soon as it touched the earth. The seeds of that corruption which grew and shot up into the overshadowing despotism of papal Rome, were sown in the age of the Apostles, as we learn in the Epistles; and we infer from the condition of the world, that nothing but a stupendous miracle, subverting all the laws of the human mind, could

have prevented their developement. Who that understands human nature, does not know, that old associations are not broken up in a moment; that to minds, plunged in a midnight of error, truth must gradually open like the dawning day; that old views will mingle with the new; that old ideas, which we wish to banish, will adhere to the old words to which they were formerly attached; and that the sudden and entire eradication of long-rooted errors would be equivalent to the creation of a new intellect? How long did the Apostles, under Christ's immediate tuition, withstand his instructions? Even Peter, after the miraculous illumination of the day of Pentecost, remained ignorant, until the message from Cornelius, of that glorious feature of Christianity, the abolition of the Jewish peculiarity, and the equal participation of the Gentiles with the Jews in the blessings of the Messiah. As soon as Christianity was preached, it was blended with Judaism, which had power to neutralize the authority of Paul in many churches. In like manner, it soon began to be "spoiled" of its simplicity "by philosophy and science falsely so called," and to be encumbered by Pagan ceremonies. The first Christians were indeed brought into "wonderful light," if their Christian state be compared with the darkness from which they had emerged; but not if compared with the perfection of knowledge to which Christ came to exalt the human race. The earliest Fathers, as we learn from their works, were not receptive of large communications of truth. Their writings abound in puerilities and marks of childish credulity, and betray that indistinctness of vision, which is experienced by men, who issue from thick darkness into the light of day. In the ages of barbarism, which followed the fall of the Roman empire, Christianity, though it answered wise purposes of Providence, was more and more disfigured and obscured. The Reformation was indeed a glorious era; but glorious for its reduction of papal and clerical power, and for the partial liberation of the mind, rather than for immediate improvements of men's apprehensions of Christianity. Some of the reformers invented or brought back as injurious errors as those they overthrew. Luther's consubstantiation differed from the Pope's transubstantiation by a syllable, and that was all the gain; and we may safely say, that transubstantiation was a less monstrous doctrine, than the five points of Calvin. How vain, therefore, was

Milton's search for "the mangled Osiris," for "the lovely form and immortal features of truth," in the history of the church!

Let us not be misunderstood, as if we would cut off the present age from the past. We mean not, that Milton should have neglected the labours of his predecessors. He believed justly, that all the periods and generations of the human family are bound together by a sublime connexion, and that the wisdom of each age is chiefly a derivation from all preceding ages, not excepting the most ancient, just as a noble stream, through its whole extent, and in its widest overflowings, still holds communication with its infant springs, gushing out, perhaps, in the depths of distant forests, or on the heights of solitary mountains. We only mean to say, that the stream of religious knowledge, is to swell and grow through its whole course, and to receive new contributions from gifted minds in successive generations. We only regret, that Milton did not draw more from the deep and full fountains of his own soul. We wish only to teach, that antiquity was the infancy of our race, and that its acquisitions, instead of being rested in, are to bear us onward to new heights of truth and virtue. We mean not to complain of Milton for not doing more. He rendered to mankind a far greater service than that of a teacher of an improved theology. He taught and exemplified that spirit of intellectual freedom, through which all the great conquests of truth are to be achieved, and by which the human mind is to attain to a new consciousness of its sublime faculties, and to invigorate and expand itself for ever.

We here close our remarks on Milton. In offering this tribute, we have aimed at something higher, than to express and gratify our admiration of an eminent man. We believe, that an enlightened and exalted mind is a brighter manifestation of God, than the outward universe; and we have set forth, as we have been able, the praises of an illustrious servant of the Most High, that, through him, glory may redound to the Father of all spirits, the Fountain of all wisdom and magnanimous virtue. And still more; we believe, that the sublime intelligence of Milton was imparted, not for his own sake only, but to awaken kindred virtue and greatness in other souls. Far from regarding him as standing alone and unapproachable, we believe that he is an illustration of what all, who are true

to their nature, will become in the progress of their being; and we have held him forth, not to excite an ineffectual admiration, but to stir up our own and others' breasts to an exhilarating pursuit of high and ever-growing attainments in intellect and virtue.

Reply to Philo-Veritas.

SIR,

I INTEND the following as a reply rather to the spirit and substance of your objections, than a detailed answer of your queries. Your prejudice (as I consider it), "that there is no medium between the *mere* humanity and *supreme* deity of Christ," will prevent you, so long as it is entertained, from seeing the justice of any explanation which could be offered, of the particular texts you have quoted, or of any other of the same kind.

I will first slightly advert to the very palpable mistake in your allegation, that *all* Unitarians assert the *mere* humanity of Christ. The Arians, a pretty numerous body, expressly contend against such an idea, and yet contend with equal zeal for the strict Unity of the Godhead. But perhaps you think that the theory of Arius respecting the person of Christ, is only a compromise of difficulties equally inconsistent with the *proper humanity* or the *proper deity* of our Lord; and, therefore, ought to be put out of the question. Well, be it so. I like to bring argument to a point. For the same reason, I will grant you, that some eminent Unitarian advocates (Priestley, for instance) have sometimes expressed themselves in such a way as to give some ground for your prejudice. On this head, I would only ask for the fair play which is claimed by one of the most distinguished modern advocates of Orthodoxy, Magee. Speaking of definitions of the doctrine of the Atonement, and of the idea attached to it, as if an atonement was necessary to *make God merciful*, he scouts it—declares it to be a calumny—and asserts his right to claim and to vindicate what he conceives to be the truth of the subject, without regard to such *ultra* views. Notwithstanding this, however, it is perfectly well known, to every person versant in the history of theology —that our forefathers were, in this instance, really of that ultra spirit which he disavows, and that many of the orthodox are so to this day. Just so with Unitarianism;—

some of its earlier advocates, in the heat of controversy, might carry matters to an extreme; but our faith is not pinned to their sleeves. I may suppose, that the doctrine of the Trinity tends to *Tritheism;* you may suppose, that the doctrine of Unitarianism tends to that of the *mere humanity*; and, in some cases, and with minds of a certain description, our impressions may be equally just. But let the lovers of truth be candid, and judge *of* others as they desire to be judged *by* others.

I will next admit, that the Scriptures speak in very high terms of the character and office of Christ, and that in some instances, titles and attributes are assigned to him, which in their abstract nature do only belong properly to the Deity. But the question still remains, and it is the true one, between the Trinitarian and Unitarian, —Whether such attributes belong *essentially* and *intrinsically* to Jesus, or were *bestowed* upon him, and *derived* from the One Supreme Being—the Father Almighty? This is *the point.* I have purposely used the name *Jesus* here, rather than *Son*,—not with the view of taking any advantage of it in the argument, but because the introduction of the term Son (in the sense in which it is popularly understood), takes the question for granted, which ought to be proved; and even although that be not intended, yet it necessarily obscures the discussion.

Here, then, is a Man—Jesus of Nazareth—laying claim to the title of the Son of God, and to other titles and attributes of high import. Do these circumstances justify us in supposing, that he is personally the Supreme Being; or one of a Trinity, making up this Supreme Being, and essentially equal to the other members of the said Trinity? This is the question. I waive all objections on the ground of his appearing in the form of man—of his being born, dying, and rising again,—because all this may be said truly of him, in regard to his *human vehicle,* let his animating spirit, or proper person, be what it may. But when he speaks (or others speak of him) in his proper and peculiar character and offices, What does he say of himself? Does he say, that his attributes are *intrinsic,* or *derived?*

And, here, I need not furnish you with any list of texts, in favour of his derived and subordinate power and authority, because you have already One Hundred of them before you in this Miscellany. Perhaps you may object

to some of them, as not being quite to *the point* in the shape I have here put it; but I think you cannot deny, that a great many of them are expressly in favour of derived and subordinate power and authority. You can only set aside their obvious import, in the way of opposing it by texts of a contrary description; but remember, that they must directly, and obviously affirm the essential and independent Deity of Christ. The whole host of texts usually quoted in favour of his high titles and attributes, go for nothing to the argument as we have put it. I can scarcely guess what passages of Scripture you might adduce to *this point;* but I shall suppose you produced one for every five of its opposites. What then? "The Scripture cannot be broken"—it cannot be inconsistent—the interpretation of one of these classes of apparently opposite testimony, must be interpreted and modified (if need be) by the other; and which shall yield?—the one or the five?

But, as far as my memory serves me, you will find no text *direct* to your point. The most that can be urged, is, that there are a few texts which use language *so strong* that it nearly amounts to an express assertion of the Supreme Deity of Christ. Of these we shall take some which you quoted, as a sample. Several of them rest on the use of the term "God our Saviour." We are in the habit, in these modern days, of using the term *our Saviour*, as a proper name of Jesus the Christ; and from this association of ideas, you infer, that the term "God our Saviour," used in the Scriptures, is equivalent to "our Saviour (in the modern sense of the word) is God." Nothing can be more loose than such an inference. God the Father, our Creator, our Preserver, and Deliverer, is, in all these, and other respects, independent of the Christian economy—*our Saviour;* and is so styled in the Old Testament, whose language the Apostles adopted; and under the Christian economy, and according to *any theory*, he participates in the work of our salvation, and is consequently *our Saviour*, as well as Christ is. As to the passage in Isaiah, the learned are not agreed about the correctness of our common translation; and it is time enough to bring forward such passages on either side, when they have settled their rendering.

I select those two texts which you have more expressly quoted, to show how they may be interpreted according

to our system. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Jesus was anointed, *without measure*, with the Spirit of God, and had power to communicate the same Spirit, in certain measures, to his disciples—"to baptize with the Holy Ghost, and with fire;" and the power was *increased* after his ascension, of which the day of Pentecost bore witness. Nor is this power abated by the lapse of *time*. Wherever men meet in his name, the gifts and energy of this Spirit will be displayed, if not repressed and grieved by their own follies. This influence is called *Christ*, by the same figure of speech whereby it is said "that Christ dwelleth in our hearts." Again; "God was manifest in the flesh." The power and wisdom of God are *manifested* in the works of creation, even in their quiescent and natural state—much more when they were called into existence, or when their laws are reversed by any miraculous interference. When God appeared on the top of Mount Sinai, he was not personally *present* there, in such a way as if he were *absent* from other parts of the universe. He only made his presence *visible* and *manifest* to the senses of the people, by a miraculous exertion of his power. In the character and actions of Christ, God gave another miraculous display of *his presence;* but chiefly of a moral kind—"of his grace and truth"—and rather to be perceived by the moral, than by the natural senses of mankind. Such displays of the divine energies, are called his Logos, or his Word; it has been from the beginning—all things were made by it—and, in the latter day, it was displayed in human nature—it was made flesh, and dwelt among us—and they whose senses were rightly exercised to discern it, beheld his glory, and do yet behold it.

For a more extended illustration of some of these observations, I would refer you to a book published a few years ago, by Whittaker in London, and Chalmers & Collins in Glasgow, entitled "The Primitive Doctrine, concerning the Person of Christ." The author of it has some peculiar views, that do not concern our present argument; but, at all events, it will convince you, that a man may entertain the most exalted views of the character and offices of Christ—views not inferior in point of practical dignity to those of Orthodoxy itself—and yet he may be a strict and decided Unitarian.

PHILO-VERITAS ALTER.

Christianity in India.

(Continued from p. 185.)

Rammohun Roy began his career of Reformation, by endeavouring to prove to his countrymen, that their Scriptures inculcated the idea of the Unity of the Supreme Being; and that all other deities of whom they spoke, were merely personifications or symbols, for the benefit of those whose minds it was necessary to address through the medium of sensible representations. It required no common mind, to brave the obloquy which, of course, would follow so open an opposition to his nation's errors. "By taking the path which conscience and sincerity direct," he remarks, in the introduction to one of his earliest publications, "I, born a Brahmin, have exposed myself to the complainings and reproaches even of some of my relations, whose prejudices are strong, and whose temporal advantage depends upon the present system. But these, however accumulated, I can tranquilly bear, trusting that a day will arrive, when my humble endeavours will be viewed with justice, perhaps acknowledged with gratitude. At any rate, whatever men may say, I cannot be deprived of this consolation, my motives are acceptable to that Being, who beholds in secret and compensates openly." In the commencement of another work, he observes, "I, although born a Brahmin, and instructed in my youth in all the principles of that sect, being thoroughly convinced of the lamentable errors of my countrymen, have been stimulated to employ every means in my power, to improve their minds, and lead them to the knowledge of a purer system of morality. Living constantly amongst Hindoos of different sects and professions, I have had ample opportunities of observing the superstitious puerilities into which they have been thrown by their self-interested guides, who, in defiance of the law as well as of common sense, have succeeded but too well in conducting them to the temple of idolatry; and, while they hide from their view, the true substance of morality, have infused into their simple hearts a weak attachment for its mere shadow."—"I have never ceased to contemplate, with the strongest feelings of regret, the obstinate adherence of my countrymen to their fatal system of idolatry, enduring, for the sake of propitiating their supposed deities, the violation of every humane and social

feeling. And this, in various instances, but more especially in the dreadful acts of self-destruction, and the immolation of the nearest relations, under the delusion of conforming to sacred religious rites. I have never ceased, I repeat, to contemplate these practices with the strongest feelings of regret, and to view in them, the moral debasement of a race, who, I cannot help thinking, are capable of better things—whose susceptibility, patience, and mildness of character, render them worthy of a better destiny. Under these impressions, therefore, I have been impelled to lay before them, genuine translations of parts of their Scripture, which inculcates not only the enlightened worship of One God, but the purest principles of morality, accompanied with such notices as I deemed requisite, to oppose the arguments of the Brahmins, in defence of their beloved system. Most earnestly do I pray, that the whole may, sooner or later, prove efficient, in producing on the minds of Hindoos in general, a conviction of the rationality of believing in, and adoring the Supreme Being only, together with a complete perception and practice of that grand and comprehensive moral principle,—Do unto others as you would be done by."

We cannot conceive that these extracts can be read without approbation and pleasure, and thankfulness to God, by any unprejudiced mind; or that they can fail to make a deep impression on any heart not cased in bigotry. Whatever may be thought of the validity of the argument of the Indian Reformer, surely no one can question the virtuous motives which prompted his labours. It may be contended, that there is so much wild mythology, so much useless fabling, so much imperfect and even bad morality, contained in the Hindoo Scriptures, that the books cannot be defended as a guide to doctrine and practice; this may be granted, and yet, he who, aware of the imperfection of the Hindoo Scriptures, and, at the same time, aware of the reverence with which they were regarded, presented them in their best position, and threw over their deformities, the best interpretations with which they would admit of being clothed, must still be considered as a national benefactor. Rammohun Roy used them as a schoolmaster, to bring his brethren to Christ; and every sincere and practical believer must wish, that God may render them effectual to this most important object. The various publications of Rammohun Roy, against Idolatry and Widow-

burning, a list of twelve of which is now lying before us, have already produced considerable effect; and, from the specimen of these works which have come under our own notice, we think them calculated to produce lasting and extensive benefit, and to be highly interesting to every man, who has really at heart the emancipation of millions of his fellow-creatures from the thraldom of error.

It was impossible, that such a mind as that of Rammohun Roy, thirsting after truth, and anxious for the intellectual improvement and moral regeneration of his fellow creatures, should not be drawn to a consideration of the religion of Jesus Christ. It was so drawn—and bowed with admiration before its moral loveliness and perfection. But that admiration was chilled, by the representations which were made by the missionaries, respecting the leading doctrines of the Gospel; and his progress towards acknowledging the divine mission of Jesus, was stayed by their casting in his path, the stumbling-block of the Trinity. He told a worthy clergyman at Calcutta, that he preferred Christianity to all other religions, and would certainly embrace it, if it were not for the doctrine of the Trinity; but this was an insurmountable obstacle. Happily, however, for himself and the world, he did not, like too many, rest contented with the common representations of Christian doctrine; nor especially did he, as numbers have done, in lands called Christian, discard Revelation altogether, on account of its being asserted to proclaim the astounding and heart-withering sentiments of the popular creed, and to require a lowly "prostration of the understanding" in all its votaries. He acted a more manly, a more rational part. He examined the evidences of Christianity for himself—he carefully and seriously investigated the Bible—he took his views of its hallowed doctrines, not from Mr. Schmidt, or from Dr. Marshman, but from Jesus Christ and his Apostles, and the result of his inquiry was, his firm conviction of the divine mission of the Saviour, and that Christianity was the best and most sacred gift of God to man. Let Rammohun Roy, however, speak for himself:—"I have now," he observes, in a letter written in 1822, "every reason to hope, that the truths of Christianity will not be much longer kept hidden under the veil of heathen doctrines and practices, gradually introduced among the followers of Christ, since many lovers of truth are zealously engaged in rendering

the religion of Jesus clear from corruption. I admire the zeal of the Missionaries sent to this country, but disapprove of the means they have adopted. In the performance of their duty, they always begin with such obscure doctrines, as are calculated to excite ridicule, instead of respect, towards the religion which they wish to promulgate. The accompanying pamphlets, called the Brahmunical Magazine, and published by a Brahmun, are a proof of my assertion. The last number of this publication has remained unanswered for twelve months. If a body of men attempt to upset a system of doctrines generally established in a country, and to introduce another system, they are, in my humble opinion, in duty bound to prove the truth, or at least the superiority of their own. It is, however, a great satisfaction to my conscience, to find that the doctrines inculcated by Jesus and his Apostles, are quite different from those human inventions which the Missionaries are persuaded to profess, and that they are entirely consistent with reason and the Revelation delivered by Moses and the Prophets. I am therefore anxious to support them, even at the risk of my own life. I rely much on the force of truth, which will, I am sure, ultimately prevail. Our number is comparatively small; but I am glad to inform you, that none of them can be justly charged with the want of zeal and prudence. I wish to add, in order that you may set me right, if you find me mistaken, my view of Christianity is, that in representing all mankind as the children of One eternal Father, it enjoins them to love one another, without making any distinction of country, caste, colour, or creed, notwithstanding, they may be justified in the sight of the Creator, in manifesting their respect towards each other, according to the propriety of their actions, and the reasonableness of their religious opinions and observances."—"Although our adversaries are both numerous and zealous, as the adversaries of truth always have been, yet our prospects are by no means discouraging, if we only have the means of following up what has already been done. We confidently hope, that through these various means, the period will be accelerated, when the belief in the Divine Unity, and in the mission of Christ, will universally prevail."

We consider the conversion of this learned Brahmin to Christianity, a remarkable event of the present age;

and one of the strongest practical arguments, which could be adduced, in favour of Unitarianism. He studied the Scriptures alone; and his own writings prove, that he studied them with uncommon attention. He believed them on their own authority; and he now declares his willingness to support the truths they contain, even at the risk of his own life. He has found no Trinity there; he has found "One God, and One Mediator;" the Supreme Being, and his subordinate Messiah; the Creator of all things, and the Son by whom he revealed his will to the world. Rammohun Roy well remarks, "Early impressions alone can induce a Christian to believe, that three are one, and one is three; just as by the same means, a Hindoo is made to believe that millions are one, and one is millions; and to imagine, that an inanimate idol is a living substance, and capable of assuming various forms. As I have sought to attain the truths of Christianity, from the words of the Author of this religion, and from the undisputed instructions of his holy Apostles, and not from a parent, or tutor, I cannot help refusing my assent to any doctrine, which I do not find scriptural."

(To be Continued.)

Mr. M'Gavin and the Church of Scotland Hymns.

The Apocryphal controversy has occasioned some strange exhibitions. It has roused, in a high degree, the rancorous spirit of party, and has called forth coarse and unwarrantable personal accusations and recriminations. But, perhaps, the most curious and unlooked for attack, is that made by Mr. M'Gavin, in his Reply to the Rev. Patrick M'Farlan's Strictures on the Rev. Greville Ewing's Speech. In this Reply, Mr. M'Gavin utters what he himself very properly characterizes as a "dreadful sentiment," that "there is more insidious poison in one of the hymns of your Church, than in all Paine's works put together." We give the hymn entire;—

"1 When rising from the bed of death,
O'erwhelm'd with guilt and fear,
I see my Maker face to face,
Oh, how shall I appear!
2 If yet while pardon may be found,
And mercy may be sought,
My heart with inward sorrow shrinks,
And trembles at the thought;

3 When thou, O Lord! shalt stand disclos'd
In majesty severe,
And sit in judgment on my soul,
Oh, how shall I appear!
4 But thou hast told the troubled mind,
Who doth her sins lament,
That timely grief for errors past
Shall future woe prevent.

5 Then see the sorrows of my heart,
Ere yet it be too late;
And hear my Saviour's dying groans,
To give those sorrows weight.
6 For never shall my soul despair
Of mercy at thy throne,
Who knows thine only Son has died
Thy justice to atone."

Of this hymn Mr. M'Gavin remarks, that though "it has nothing revolting to the finest human feelings," yet that "it is more dangerous" than Paine's works, "because it presents fatal error in a polite and apparently Christian dress." He asserts, that the first verse states what "shall not be the state of any Christian in" the day of judgment; that "every real Christian has his guilt taken away before death, and usually his fears too, though perhaps not always. But, certainly, his justified, and then thoroughly sanctified soul, shall have no fear at the resurrection;" and that "no Christian, then, can sing these lines without virtually renouncing his Saviour and his hope." These seem to us, to be strange sayings, and to inculcate a stranger doctrine even than the hymn itself. Christian Unitarians are often charged, we know how falsely, with claiming the rewards of heaven, as due to their own merits; but we conceive, that, even if the charge were true, that sentiment would never lead to the presumptuous confidence manifested in the assertion, that "every real Christian has his guilt taken away before death, and usually his fears too," and, therefore, "shall have no fear at the resurrection!" We think, that these assertions are genuine Calvinistic conclusions; but we also think, in the language of "The Protestant," that, "like the Antinomians," they "are not far from Popery, having nearly met with it in the opposite extreme of" fanaticism.

But Mr. M'Gavin has not yet done with this hymn. The 4th and 5th verses, cause him to say, "There is not, in the whole system of the man of sin, the antichrist, a more subtle perversion of the Gospel; and it must be eternally destructive of every one who dies under the de-

lusion;"—"this hymn of your Church, seduces them in the very hour of death, and sends them to the grave and the judgment-seat trusting in a lie." Mr. M'Gavin has reviled Popery on account of its anathematizing and uncharitable spirit; he is himself a Dissenter, we presume, on the ground that Jesus Christ is the Master of the Christian Church; and yet here he thrusts himself into the judgment-seat, and, with a clause as sweeping as that of the Athanasian Creed, boldly pronounces, that the sentiment of the hymn on which he animadverts, "must be eternally destructive of every one who dies under the delusion!" "Happy is he who condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth."

Mr. M'Gavin, having thus lost sight of charity, next proceeds to a representation of Scripture, for which, we think, he has no Scripture warrant. He says, "Christ ALONE is the Saviour; his righteousness ALONE is the ground of hope." We have been accustomed to read, in our New Testaments, that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"—"that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them"—that "by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God"—"the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord;" and having been thus instructed, we gladly "testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." Much as we honour our blessed Master—entertaining, as we do, the liveliest veneration for his character, love of his moral excellences, and his unfailing benevolence, and gratitude for the blessings he was the chosen medium of communicating—yet, rejoicing, as we likewise do, in the truth of that Scripture declaration, that "God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities," we cannot give to Christ alone, the thankfulness of our hearts, and exclude the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, from our admiring and adoring contemplations,—we dare not pay to Christ the supreme homage of our souls, and leave the God of the universe on an unhonoured throne. Mr. M'Gavin may wonder, that "evangelical Ministers in the Church" "should suffer such blasphemy to be bound up with the Bible," as he thinks is contained in the hymn under con-

sideration, but it would be well for him, and the "evangelical Ministers in the Church," and out of the Church too, seriously and dispassionately to inquire, whether their opinions are not further removed from Christ and Christianity, than even the "blasphemy" of this much reprobated hymn.

Having thus commenced his Quixotic career of poetical condemnation, Mr. M'Gavin, become bolder from the conflict, has a tilt with the beautiful thanksgiving of Addison. "There are other exceptionable passages in these hymns of yours, which make them a most unworthy accompaniment of the Bible. Addison's fine one, for instance, 'When all thy mercies, O my God!' &c. I mean fine in point of composition, may do well enough for a Pharisee, but I never knew a humble Christian who could sing it in faith with a good conscience!" We confess, we were never more surprised at any assertion than this. We have in vain endeavoured to conceive its cause. We had thought that every person not wholly destitute of feeling, must have admired this beautiful outpouring of a grateful spirit. The deep feeling of piety, and of ardent gratitude, which breathes throughout it, we had imagined, must have found a responsive aspiration in every pious breast. It is perhaps possible, to conceive of a mind, seared by party malignity—an intellect, degraded by dwelling chiefly on images of gloom—a taste, vitiated and depraved by chanting forth

"And did the holy and the just,
The Sovereign of the skies,
Stoop down to wretchedness and dust,
That guilty worms might rise!
Yes, the Redeemer left his throne,
His radiant throne on high:
Surprising mercy! love unknown!
To suffer, bleed, and die."

"The law its best obedience owes
To our incarnate God;
And thine avenging justice shows
Its honours in his blood."

"Jesus, my God, thy blood alone
Hath power sufficient to atone."

"View him prostrate in the garden:
On the ground your Maker lies!
On the bloody tree behold him;
Here him cry before he dies,
'It is finished:'
Sinner, will not *this* suffice!

Lo, the incarnate God, ascended,
Pleads the merit of his blood,
Rest upon him, trust him wholly,
Let no other trust intrude;
None but Jesus
Can do helpless sinners good."

"As much when in the manger laid,
Almighty Ruler of the sky,
As when the six days' work he made,
Fill'd all the morning stars with joy.'

"Jesus, the Lord our God,
Bore sin's tremendous load,
Praise ye his name."

"Till God in human flesh I see,
My thoughts no comfort find;
The holy, just, and sacred Three
Are terrors to my mind."

"Jesus, thou great atoning Lamb,
Lover of lost mankind,
Salvation in whose name alone
A sinful world can find!
We ask thy grace to make us clean;
We come to thee our God:
Open, O Lord, for this day's sin,
The fountain of thy blood."

"My Advocate appears
For my defence on high,
The Father bows his ears,
And lays his thunder by."

"Our Saviour alone
The Lord, let us bless,
Who reigns on his throne
The Prince of our peace;
Who evermore saves us
By shedding his blood;
All hail, holy Jesus,
Our Lord and our God."

—it is possible, certainly, that a taste rendered coarse by such strains as these, and ignorant of the higher and more sacred effusions of true poetry, and destitute of a devotional spirit himself, might see no beauty that it should be desired in Addison's hymn. But although we have made these extracts from "A Collection of Hymns from the best Authors," partly selected by Mr. Ewing, of whom Mr. M'Gavin declares, that, "having enjoyed the benefit of his ministry and personal friendship for twenty years, I can bear witness to the fervent zeal with which he maintains the integrity and purity of God's Word,"—though these quotations are parts of hymns used by the congregation of which Mr. M'Gavin is a member,—yet we should have thought, from the circle in which he moves, and the

advantages he possesses, that he would not have stooped to the utterance of such a "dreadful sentiment."

"The hymn" "may do well enough for a Pharisee, but I never knew a humble Christian who could sing it in faith with a good conscience!"—The author of "the Protestant" may perhaps recollect, that, in the 10th No. of that work, may be read, "Let one go to the Green of Glasgow on a Sabbath evening, among the hundreds of men and women whom he will see there, he will not find one in ten who can give him a proper answer to the simple question, What is real Christianity, or, What is the Gospel of Christ? Yet these are all Christians in their own esteem, and would be affronted should any one refuse them the name. Let him make a more extensive survey, let him go through all the parishes in Scotland, let him even make his inquiries of the people whom he meets coming from church on a Sabbath day, he will no doubt find among the church-going people more religious knowledge than among those who spend their Sabbath evenings on our Green, but he will be obliged to come to the conclusion, that the proportion is but small that can tell him what real Christianity is, or, what is the Gospel of Christ. I shall suppose an artful, well-informed Papist (and many of them are such) going to our Green on a Sabbath evening, and entering freely into conversation with all he meets, I could venture to assure him, that he would not find one in a hundred who could tell why he is a Protestant, or make any sensible reply to his arguments in support of Popery. Nay more, that I may not be charged with drawing my conclusions from the state of knowledge among the lower classes of society, I shall suppose one going into our Coffee-Room in the busiest hour of the day, and putting the same questions, What is real Christianity? What is the gospel of Christ? Why are you a Protestant? and I question if one in ten would give a sensible answer, unless it were, that he could not tell!" It would be well, we think, for Mr. M'Gavin to inquire what opinion rational and unprejudiced men entertain of such assertions as these. We are much mistaken, if they would not reply, that such "hard sayings" "may do well enough for a Pharisee," but that they "never knew a humble Christian who could" say them "in faith with a good conscience." We are justified, we think, in concluding, that unhallowed feelings have been mingled in this Apocryphal

controversy, and that party animosity has dictated this attack on Addison's hymn, when we find that the 45th hymn of the collection at the Tabernacle, is this identical composition, which "may do well enough for a Pharisee," but which Mr. M'Gavin "never knew a humble Christian who could sing it in faith with a good conscience!" The hymn is indeed despoiled of five verses, but the remaining eight are there, and printed, verbatim, the same as in the Church of Scotland selection. We strongly advise Mr. M'Gavin, therefore, to set his own house in order, before he throws stones at that of his neighbour.

This champion of pure poetical conformity to God's Word, has not yet finished his *Index Purgatorius*. "In the 16th Paraphrase, also, there is something worse than exceptionable. It is very bad;—

> 'In life's gay morn, when sprightly youth
> With vital ardour glows,
> And shines in all the fairest charms
> Which beauty can disclose;
> Deep on thy soul, before its powers
> Are yet by vice enslaved,
> Be thy Creator's glorious name
> And character engraved.'

"This is so much the worse that it professes to be founded on the first verse of the twelfth chapter of Ecclesiastes,—'Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.' There is not a word there of any period of youth when the soul is not enslaved by sin." Perhaps not, Mr. M'Gavin, if persons stop in the middle of the verse, as you have done; but read the whole, and afterwards meditate on the context, and then, can you make the same assertion? "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." It seems to us, that the poetry is indeed a very close and accurate paraphrase of the text. We cannot avoid remarking, however, that it is the mode of quoting Scripture, of which Mr. M'Gavin has here given us a specimen, that is one prolific source of the numberless errors so prevalent in the world; and that, would mankind act as faithfully by the Bible as they do by works infinitely below it in value and importance,—judge from its general tenor, and not from detached sentences wrested from their connexion, the truth as it is in Jesus would soon have free scope, and would be justified. Mr. M'Gavin,

however, again shows his manner of quoting Scripture:—" ' The Divine declaration, is, Every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart *is* only evil continually; and evil from his youth.'—Gen. vi. 5. and viii. 21. The doctrine of your hymn approaches to the Socinian figment, of the souls of youth being like a sheet of white paper!" The passages in Genesis are, vi. 5—" And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually."—viii. 21. " And the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth: neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done." These passages contain the statement of a *fact*, not of a *doctrine;* they are averments of the *actual*, not the *natural* depravity of mankind: that they are not to be understood, without exception, is evident by the instance of Noah, mentioned in the 8th and 9th verses of the first quoted chapter,—" But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord."—" Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God." Mr. M'Gavin, in his quotation, has changed " was" into " is," and has by this interpolation, made the passage refer to all times, present as well as future; whilst, in its original state, it merely relates a past fact. As to the " fling" of " the Socinian figment," Mr. M'Gavin knows well enough, that it is easier to give a doctrine an opprobrious name, than to answer a solid argument: any person may call an opinion a " figment," though he may not find it so convenient to prove it to be one. Mr. M'Gavin ought to be sufficiently acquainted, too, with the English language, to know that there is some difference between " youth" and infancy; if not, a dictionary would inform him. It may be a figment to say, that " the souls of youth" are " like a sheet of white paper," though certainly it is not a " Socinian" one; and yet it may be perfectly true, that the souls of *infants are* " like a sheet of white paper." Christian Unitarians do, indeed, reject the doctrine of original or birth sin—of native, hereditary total depravity: because they deem it to be at war with the nature of things, inconsistent with reason, opposed to Scripture, and a libel on the blessed God. And that they can give a reason for this faith which is in them, is evident, from an admirable

letter addressed, in the year 1819, to "The Protestant," by a Layman of this City; and of which, Mr. M'Gavin, we believe, has not yet deigned to take the slightest notice.

We close our remarks on Mr. M'Gavin's attack on the Church of Scotland Hymns, by expressing our surprise that he should have omitted to censure that other hymn of Addison's—"The spacious firmament on high," &c. We are surprised at this, not because we do not admire the hymn ourselves, but as Paine has inserted it in his works, as an example of "true deistical composition;" it would, in the view of the prejudiced, have furnished a stronger case against "the Kirk," than the hymns actually adduced. That a professed Christian, too, should, when animadverting on the poetry of the Church, have omitted to condemn the use in a Christian sanctuary, of many of the versions of the Psalms, breathing, as they do, feelings and dispositions totally opposite to those inculcated by the Saviour of the world—evincing and cherishing, as they do, those warlike and wrathful passions, which are strictly prohibited by the Prince of Peace—and should waste his pious indignation on one hymn especially, which he himself confesses, has in it "nothing revolting to the finest human feelings,"—can only be attributed to the fact, that men are but too apt, whilst they strain at a gnat, to swallow a camel.

Dr. Wardlaw and the Unitarians.

The Edinburgh Christian Instructor for December 1826, in remarking on the Apocrypha controversy, and the conduct of the Unitarians in relation to it, observes, "Dr. Wardlaw once contended with the Unitarians in the west, and he then performed a noble service to his God and to the Church. Why is it, that he should do any thing to tarnish the laurels, which he won by fighting and conquering these adversaries to the first principles and leading tenets of the Gospel? How melancholy and humiliating, that he should be supported by such allies in this controversy!"—"It is time for the Doctor to inquire, whether, in this practical confederacy, the Unitarians have approximated to him, or he has approximated to the Unitarians! And it is of importance for him to consider, that, in any contest with that sect which may hereafter arise, they will not forget how the Bible Committee acted towards the

Sacred Record, and how that Committee found apologists, and supporters, and friends, among the keenest and most zealous of the Orthodox!" We could not forbear smiling, when we read this tirade of the Editor. It evinces so culpable an ignorance of the subject which he treats so dogmatically, as can only be accounted for on the supposition, that he has never perused the controversy between Dr. Wardlaw and Mr. Yates. *We* heard the "Discourses on the Socinian Controversy" delivered, we have perused them since they issued from the press, more than once, we have also read the "Unitarianism Incapable of Vindication," and we have likewise perused Mr. Yates's "Vindication" and "Sequel." Our opinion, therefore, on the merits of this controversy, might perhaps be entitled to as much weight as that of the Editor of the Christian Instructor. But, instead of giving an opinion, on a subject on which our sentiments might be supposed to bias our judgments, we much prefer pressing on all our readers, the importance and propriety of reading both sides of this ably conducted discussion; and we leave the decision of the matter, to their own serious and dispassionate inquiry, without a single fear for the interests of truth. It may be allowed us, however, to remark, that, when a person wins "laurels," "by fighting and conquering" "adversaries," it is usual for the conqueror to retain possession of the field of battle. An Apostle has informed us, that, "if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully." Those who peruse the following extract from the Preface to the Second Edition of Mr. Yates's "Sequel," published in 1822, may perhaps be of opinion, that, as the Apostolic terms of triumph have not, in Dr. Wardlaw's case, been complied with, the period for crowning him is yet to come; and they may also conceive, that the "laurels" have long since been tarnished, even if they were ever "won."

To one subject it is necessary for me now to advert, although I cannot do it without pain and deep regret. This is the conduct of my opponent, Mr. (now Dr.) Wardlaw. It is more than eight years since our controversy commenced, and I have uniformly spoken of him with every expression of esteem and respect, which I thought suitable to his talents and character. This he has returned, not only with frequent contumely, but with a charge of "*wilful and deliberate misrepresentation;*" and although I have, in Part III. Chap. IV. of the following work, completely justified myself from this accusation, and have likewise, in the

Advertisement to the Second Edition of my "Vindication of Unitarianism," published more than four years ago, observed, that "I still looked to Dr. Wardlaw, *as a man of honour and integrity*," to correct his statements, he has observed a total silence. Although unconscious of any feeling adverse to his true honour and happiness, I wish to inform him, that I esteem my character as valuable as my life, and that I do not make much difference in point of turpitude between the man who attacks the one, and him who traduces the other. Indeed every one will perceive, that such behaviour as Dr. Wardlaw's must put a stop to all intercourse or respectful consideration on the part of such persons as have a regard to moral character; and this notice of it is evidently incumbent upon me as his opponent, since the force of all that I have written on my side of the controversy would be lost, if he could succeed in destroying my reputation for veracity. Let him not conclude however, that my sentiments towards him are unalterable. Let him retract the charge, which he has kept for six years hanging over me, and which nevertheless, I am certain, he does not believe; and let him do what his conscience must inform him that he ought to do, in regard to the other *mis-statements* and *inaccuracies*, which he has committed. Then, but not till then, I shall be able to respect him as an honest man. In the meantime, I leave it to the attentive and impartial reader to judge between us.

Birmingham, Sept. 17, 1822. JAMES YATES.

It is now four other years since this was published, and he who "once contended with the Unitarians in the west," is still silent!

The Editor of the Christian Instructor exclaims, "How melancholy and humiliating, that" Dr. Wardlaw "should be supported by such allies" as the Unitarians, "in this controversy" respecting the Apocrypha! Had Unitarians formed part of a Society which professed to print the Bible "without note or comment," whilst, at the same time, it was printed with notes and comments, which the ignorant and unlearned deem to constitute a portion of the Sacred Word—had Unitarians circulated as a part of the pure Word of God, passages which the learned have pronounced "indisputably spurious"—had they bound up with the Bible that most "Apocryphal" address "To the Most High and Mighty Prince, James"—and had they, at the same time, railed at others for introducing other Apocryphal matter, and poured out a torrent of abuse on all who differed, in the slightest iota, from their Shibboleth,—there might possibly have been some grounds for this lamentation. But, instead of doing this, the Unitarians have used their utmost efforts to issue an improved text from the

common one—have availed themselves of all those additional aids which have been discovered since the common version was formed, to purify and reduce to its original perfection, the Sacred Record—and one of their denomination was mainly instrumental, in enabling the Editor of the best Greek Testament yet produced, to bring it forward to public notice. It may be very "melancholy and humiliating" in the view of the Editor of the Christian Instructor, that an individual should be applauded, where his conduct was conceived to merit approbation, by another denomination; but we can assure *him*, that, whilst he continues in his present system of reckless abuse of all who differ from him in opinion, he himself incurs no danger of a similar humiliation!

"It is time for the Doctor to inquire, whether, in this practical confederacy, the Unitarians have approximated to him, or he has approximated to the Unitarians!" We see no reason, why persons who agree in their views on one subject, should therefore agree in all. This sort of wholesale faith may be expected from members of an Established Church, but Dissenters, we hope, have learned a different lesson. If they have really imbibed the spirit of their Saviour, they will consider, "the wisest and the best way then, is, to render the present life happy, by agreeing where we can, and where we cannot, by agreeing to differ."

In conclusion, we submit to our readers the following summary of the controversy between Dr. Wardlaw and Mr. Yates, hoping that it will induce them all to read the whole of the various works, more seriously to study their Bibles, and to pray that the blessing of the Father of mercies may accompany their investigations. In the "Sequel" to his "Vindication of Unitarianism," Mr. Yates observes,

In replying to the contents of my Third Part, Dr. Wardlaw loses entirely the calmness of a disputant, who is conscious of the strength of his cause. He does not hesitate to avow the *provocation*, the *indignant disdain*, &c. by which his mind is agitated; and it must be confessed, that here we discover little indeed of the dignity of the philosopher, the correctness of the scholar, the courtesy of the gentleman, or the mild benevolence of the Christian. Whilst I regret exceedingly, that in a controversy upon a subject of supreme importance, and from which, if properly conducted, the most valuable results might have been expected, my opponent should have had recourse to this species of warfare, I

solemnly enjoin the reader to "take heed to his spirit," and to preserve his heart from any feeling like indignation or resentment either towards myself or towards Dr. Wardlaw; and I request him, in justice to myself, to read attentively what I have written in the Third Part of my "Vindication of Unitarianism," comparing my statements of Dr. Wardlaw's doctrines with what he himself has said in his "Discourses," and then to judge of the grounds for the heavy charges of "wilful misrepresentation" and "provoking disingenuousness," which in his present work he has advanced against me.

Dr. Wardlaw, writing in the treatise before us upon the doctrine of the Trinity, repeats what he had asserted in his "Discourses," that he "believes *the fact*, although he is ignorant respecting *the mode* or *manner* of the fact."* What we are to understand by "*the mode or manner of the fact*," I have never been able to determine: the phrase appears to me to belong to the number of those, which darken counsel by words without knowledge. It is clear, however, that Dr. Wardlaw asserts *a fact*. The fact, stated in his own language, is this; that "in the Unity of the Godhead there are three distinct Subsistences or Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." This fact he wishes me to believe. Before assenting to it, I am desirous, as in every other case, to understand the meaning of the proposition.—"You repeat to me a fact, which you say is of superlative importance; before I can believe it, I must know what it is: you announce a proposition, I wish to be informed what ideas you annex to the terms of the proposition."—To this query Dr. Wardlaw appears to me to return two different answers, varying his explanations according to the purpose, which he has in view in each particular case.

In the first place, he replies, that "the subject is so completely removed beyond the view of the human understanding, that it is impossible for us to form upon it any clear or accurate conceptions.—"Of the precise import of the terms "*Unity*," "*Distinct*," "*Person*," and "*Subsistence*," which are employed in the proposition, I shall not attempt," says he, "to convey to your mind, any clear ideas. I cannot impart to you what I do not possess myself. I however assert, that the proposition contains an important truth, because that truth is declared by Divine authority."†

I answer, "Show me that it is declared by Divine authority, and I shall assent to it with the most submissive reverence. But observe, that, in order to do this, you must show me in the Word of God, the identical proposition, which you have announced. For, since no distinct ideas are annexed to the terms of the proposition, we cannot *prove* its truth by any comparison of those terms with other phrases, to which distinct ideas are attached."‡

"If," says Dr. Wardlaw, "*the terms themselves* are *unintelligible*, you are clearly right; for in that case it would be impossible for

* Unit. Incap. of Vind. p. 63—75.
† Discourses, p. 11, 19—26, 30; Unit. Incap. of Vind. p. 63.
‡ Vind. of Unitarianism, p. 41—44, 129—132.

us to substitute *other* terms, with any degree of certain assurance that we were enunciating the same doctrine. The man, who knows not at all the meaning of the words *Ellipse, Conic, and Sections*, would in vain attempt to convey in other terms than those, in which it has been announced to himself, the proposition that *an Ellipse is one of the Conic Sections*. He must satisfy himself with repeating the *ipsissima verba*."*

"Show me then in the Word of God the identical proposition, which you have announced."—At this point of the argument, Dr. Wardlaw changes his ground. The proposition in question, he knows, does not occur in the Scriptures; he is therefore obliged to maintain only, that it may be PROVED from the Scriptures. But *proving* implies DISTINCT IDEAS; and hence he is under the necessity of representing the proposition as not merely true, but intelligible, and the ideas suggested by it so clear, the conceptions so accurate and distinct, that the truth of the proposition may be inferred with absolute certainty from a great variety of phrases and declarations contained in the Sacred Scriptures, all of which may be shown to have a manifest bearing upon the subject, and to contribute testimony, more or less abundant, in support of the proposition.

"The terms themselves," says he, "are NOT unintelligible. The *fact*, stated in the proposition, is revealed, although the *mode* of the fact is not revealed. *Reasoning* from the Scriptures is therefore the proper mode of establishing the fact, or proving the truth of the proposition."†

"With the *mode* of the fact," I answer, "we have, as is admitted on all hands, nothing to do. The Scriptures, you say, assure us of *a fact;* and you now maintain, that the terms of the proposition, in which you announce that fact, are intelligible. Permit me, therefore, to repeat the request, with which I set out, and to ask again, *What ideas do you annex to the terms of the proposition?* In the first place, what do you mean when you assert 'THE UNITY OF THE GODHEAD?'"

"I mean," replies Dr. Wardlaw, "that the universe is subject to one simple and undivided Mind, one all-wise Designer, who is uncreated, unchangeable, and everlasting, sufficient without the aid of any counsellor, assistant, or associated God, for the production of every effect, which is exhibited throughout endless time and infinite space."‡

"What do you mean by the term PERSON, or Subsistence?"

(Dr. Wardlaw.) "By a Person I mean that which possesses *personal properties*,"‖

"Of course; that is no more than saying, that a Person is a Person. But what are 'personal properties?'"

(Dr. Wardlaw.) "'Personal properties' are the properties which constitute personality. Now *that which can contrive, which can design, is a person*. These capacities constitute personality."§

* Unit. Incap. of Vind. p. 52. † Ibid. p. 52, 53.
‡ Vind. of Unit. p. 51, comp. with Unit. Incap. of Vind. p. 62, 301, 302.
‖ Discourses, p. 281. § Ibid. p. 282.

"What do you mean, when you maintain that *the Holy Spirit is a Person?*"

(Dr. Wardlaw.) "I mean, that he is not a mere attribute, or power, or influence, but AN INTELLIGENT AGENT."*

"When you affirm, that in the Unity of the Godhead there are three *Persons*, do you mean, that in the Unity of the Godhead there are three *Intelligent Agents?*"

(Dr. Wardlaw.) "I employ PERSON and INTELLIGENT AGENT as synonymous expressions."†

"You have now explained sufficiently the meaning of the proposition, which you wish me to believe. My answer is, that I could not believe it, even though I found it clearly stated in the Scriptures; because *its intrinsic absurdity* would be stronger evidence against it than any evidence in its favour, which could possibly be exhibited."‡

"I allow," replies Dr. Wardlaw, AGAIN CHANGING HIS GROUND, "that a doctrine clearly self-contradictory could not be proved even by the testimony of the Scriptures. But the doctrine, which I have stated, cannot possibly be proved to be self-contradictory, because it is a subject, on which we are left *in total ignorance*, and, unless we have *some notion* of the thing itself, on what principle can we make out the contrariety?"‖

Presuming to urge the discussion a little further, I observe, "You just now explained yourself as meaning by 'the Unity of the Godhead,' that the order of events in the universe is entirely directed by the will and agency of one simple and undivided Mind."

"I did."

"But you asserted that there have existed from all eternity in the unity of the Godhead three Persons, and you have explained yourself as meaning by a Person *an intelligent Agent*. Your doctrine appears therefore to imply, that three distinct Intelligent Agents form one simple and undivided Mind, which is a direct contradiction."

"I have explicitly declared," answers Dr. Wardlaw, "that when I used the term '*person*,' and others employed in the proposition, I would not be understood as pretending to any precise and definite conception of the nature of that distinction in Deity, which these terms import. Was it an unreasonable expectation, that you should carry this declaration along with you through the remainder of our discussion, and that, when the same terms were used again, they should be used with the qualification previously affixed to them? A generous disputant would certainly have felt himself bound to proceed on this reasonable principle."§

"You said, that when you asserted the Unity of God, you meant that all things are made by the power of one Designer. But you also asserted, that in the Unity of God there are three persons, and that by a '*person*' you mean 'that which can contrive or design.' Does not your doctrine then imply, that *three* Designers are *one* Designer?"

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* Discourses, p. 286. † Ibid. p. 286, line 14.
‡ Vind. of Unit. p. 39, 40, 128, 129.
‖ Discourses, p. 23. § Unit. Incap. of Vind. p. 65.

"I employed the term '*person*' in compliance with established usage, and because I do not know that another can be devised more appropriate. But of its precise import, as applied to a distinction in the divine essence, I have professed my own incompetency and my conviction of the incompetency of others, to form any clear conception. Justice and generosity alike required, that you should have taken along with you the qualifying explanation, which I gave in the outset, and which I certainly intended should accompany to the close of our discussion my use of the terms *distinct*, *subsistences*, *persons*, and *personality*, in their application to Deity."*

"You are now losing your temper; and without calmness of judgment on both sides, I am of opinion, that a prolongation of our discussion would be both useless and indecorous."

Such appears to me to be the exact state of the controversy, as it has been carried on between Dr. Wardlaw and myself, respecting *the nature* of the doctrine of the Trinity, and *the evidence* requisite to prove it, which are the subjects discussed in the First Chapter of my Third Part. With the agility of the most expert equestrian, he leaps from one position to another, so that it is impossible to find him maintaining any fixed opinion. By this delusive rapidity he convinces many of his readers, that a man may hold the doctrine of three persons in one God, and not forfeit his claim to the character of a rational Christian. But every one, whose eye-sight is moderately acute and clear, and who will attend to the swift rotation of Dr. Wardlaw's principles, will perceive that his proposition must either mean, that three Intelligent Agents are one Intelligent Agent, or have no distinct meaning at all; that, if it means that three Intelligent Agents are one Intelligent Agent, it is a direct contradiction, and therefore ought not to be assented to, although it were contained in the Scriptures; and that, if it convey to us no distinct meaning, we ought not to receive it as sanctioned by the authority of Scripture, unless we find it stated in the very terms, in which it is announced by Dr. Wardlaw as a part of Divine Revelation.

Dr. Wardlaw finds great fault with me for "having endeavoured to fasten on him the view of Dr. Sherlock as to the Holy Spirit being a distinct Mind, or Intelligent Being."† He however himself calls the Holy Spirit "*an Intelligent Agent*," and maintains that it is *distinct*.‡ But he objects repeatedly to the use of the word "*Being*."‖ I have always thought, that to *be* is to *exist*, and that every thing which exists is a Being. Indeed, language supplies no other term more general and extensive in its application. The word "*Agent*" is included under it. Every Agent is a Being, inasmuch as every thing which acts, exists. Every "Intelligent *Agent*" must therefore be an "Intelligent *Being;*" and Dr. Wardlaw's explanation is even more particular than Dr. Sherlock's, to which he objects as "gross and revolting."§

* Unit. Incap. of Vind. p. 67, 68. † Ibid, p. 68.
‡ Discourses, p. 286. ‖ Unit. Incap. of Vind. p. 104, 325, 331, 360.
§ Ibid. p. 66.

To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.

SIR,

In the third Number of the Christian Pioneer, I observe the following passage, in a letter by a Unitarian Christian, addressed to the Editor of the Edinburgh Star, *viz.* "Unitarians regard neither Dr. Priestley, nor Mr. Belsham, nor Mr. Lindsey, nor any uninspired teacher, as their master; but, Jesus they receive as their leader, in his steps they desire to walk, and to his instructions they submit with unlimited deference." This has led me to presume, that Unitarian Christians are taxed with having renounced the doctrines of the Gospel, and adopted those of Priestley and other writers on that side of the question; or at least, that the writings of these men have biassed the minds of those professing Unitarianism. Now, Sir, I can solemnly declare, that there is one individual, whose mind has not been influenced by the writings of any man (those of the New Testament excepted), for the best of all possible reasons, that, before the commencement of the Christian Pioneer, I had read none of the writings on either side of the controversy. I became, when a youth, an alien from the religion of my fathers, the Kirk of Scotland, chiefly on account of the doctrines which it declared the Gospel taught. I considered, also, the Unitarian in no other light, than that of an enthusiastic sectary. But after hearing two or three lectures from the very able Unitarian Pastor, whom it is the happiness of the Glasgow Congregation at present to possess, I was induced, from his repeated injunctions to that effect, *to search the Scriptures* for myself. What, Sir, were my emotions, when, in place of the doctrine that formerly made me reject the Bible,—of One Person of that mysterious Three in One, appeasing the wrath of another of the Three, by yielding himself a sacrifice, to preserve the whole race of man from condemnation everlasting,—I found that "All things are of God, who hath reconciled *us* to himself by Jesus Christ,"—"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them," 2 Cor. v. 18, 19. How shall I describe the altered sentiments of my mind, when, instead of the doctrine of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and these Three being One God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory,—I found that, "when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things un-

der him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself *be subject* unto him that put all things under him, that GOD may be ALL IN ALL," 1 Cor. xv. 27, 28. And, above all, what was my gratitude to God, when I discovered that these passages only re-echoed the teaching of Jesus and his Apostles. I have thus shown, that the Bible, and the Bible only, has made me a Unitarian; and if Unitarianism has not to boast of making a convert from the (as it is called) Orthodox faith, it has at least the consolation of having withdrawn from the paths of Infidelity, one who is happy in the progress he has already made, in the knowledge of the Truth, as it is in Jesus.

I hope this simple statement of facts may be of service to my fellow-creatures, though I am but a plain unlettered man, and its having nothing to recommend it but its truth.

I am, SIR, Your most obedient Servant,

BRIDGETON, 5th Dec. 1826. J. B.

THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

GLASGOW, *February* 1, 1827.

WE are obliged to our Correspondent, Philo Veritas Alter, for his remarks on the godhead of Jesus, though it is still our intention, as noticed in the last Number, to enter into the more minute and critical examination of the texts usually brought forward to substantiate that doctrine.

THE Unitarians have incurred the high displeasure of the Editor of the Edinburgh Christian Instructor. There is an article, headed "The Unitarians," in the December Number, which displays, we think, a most bitter feeling, and is characterised by the usual want of fairness, which has so prominently marked the observations of that Magazine, throughout the Apocrypha discussion. It commences thus, "It has always struck us, from the commencement of this controversy, that the Unitarians would be exceedingly well pleased with the part which had been taken by the London Committee. Their heresy on the subject of inspiration, their habit of intermeddling freely with the sacred text, and their hatred of all strictness in determining or abiding by the Canon of Scripture, rendered it a

matter of certainty, that they would hail the Apocryphalists on this occasion as most important auxiliaries, and treat the other party with acrimony and abuse. The event has verified these anticipations. Both in England and Scotland, the Unitarians are openly cheering the efforts of those by whom the London Committee are supported, and pouring out obloquy on all by whom they are opposed." As to the charges contained in the former part of this quotation, the Editor will find it easier to make them than to prove their truth. We deny their validity; and call on him to make good his indictment. If this "accuser of the brethren" prefers letting "judgment go by default," it will only add another instance to those previously accumulated, of his random assertions and illiberal accusations.

As to the Unitarians of England "cheering the efforts of those by whom the London Committee are supported," almost the only notice, we believe, hitherto taken of the controversy, has been, first, the observation made by an individual in the Monthly Repository, October 1826, that "All that nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand Christians in this country, know of the matter, is, that there are certain books sometimes bound up with the Bible, which, in some degree not ascertained, and for some reasons not apparent, are of lower value and authority than the rest of the volume;"—which observation, we imagine, has more truth in it than some people seem to be aware of: and, secondly, the remarks of the Editor of the same work, introductory to a letter of Dr. Pye Smith. As to the "acrimony and abuse," we have looked in vain for it in the Monthly Repository: our search, we apprehend, would be but too soon concluded, were we to turn to the pages of the Christian Instructor. The Editor of that work need not be alarmed: the Unitarians, "both in England and Scotland," are perfectly willing to let him enjoy a monopoly of "acrimony and abuse."

"Our readers," the Christian Instructor observes, "are aware of Dr. Pye Smith's defence of Haffner. This is matter of exultation and applause to the conductors of the Monthly Repository, a Unitarian Magazine, which speaks of it in these flattering terms; —'We extract the following truly excellent letter, from the Evangelical Magazine [for the present Month]. A writer in that work [under the signature of 'Alethia,' had] *has* charged the Bible Society with employing an infidel in its service, in the person of Dr. Haffner, and the same charge is preferred by a pamphleteer, we believe, Mr. Haldane. Dr. *Pye* Smith's reply is *able and* complete, and is highly honourable to his Christian spirit."

The words included within brackets, have been omitted by the Christian Instructor; and those printed in Italic, have been inserted, although the passage is marked as an unbroken and continued quotation. We notice these things, not, we hope, for the purpose of cavilling, but as other illustrations of the too common mode of citing passages from an opponent, and then arguing from the mis-statements. The Christian Instructor, amongst its other errors, has also omitted the concluding sentence, "We are happy to show, by inserting it in the Monthly Repository, that we are always ready to do justice to the liberality of our Calvinistic brethren.—Ed." Why was this sentence left out? Was it thought to exhibit too forcible a contrast to the spirit manifested by the Christian Instructor? Our readers may perhaps be of that opinion, when they reflect on the succeeding remarks of *its* Editor:—

"Truly religion is in a most flourishing state, when the Independent Professor of Homerton undertakes the defence of the Continental Rationalists, and not only gets an Evangelical Journal to insert his apology with approbation, but procures, moreover, the high applause of those whom Mr. Wilberforce represented as inhabiting the half-way house to infidelity—as to whom we can quote the authority of a certain friend of the London Committee for saying, that they are not Christians—and whose claims to be considered and treated as believers, would have been scouted in any other case, by nine-tenths of those who, to serve a present purpose, are ready to hold out to them the right hand of fellowship. Dr. Smith might now hold spiritual and praying communion with Mr. Benflower, and run no risk of incurring the displeasure of Mr. Clayton, and underlying the fear of removal from the Academy. We wonder if he has actually swallowed—surely he will never be able to digest—this monstrous dose of flattery, which has been administered to him by the followers of Priestley. His 'able and complete reply,' and 'his Christian spirit,' too, in defending such a man as Haffner, and offering a general apology for the *Rational* divines of the Continent! To what a low pass are our evangelical men reduced! And all this, for no other purpose, than that of keeping in office and in power, some dozen or score of individuals in Earl-Street, who have betrayed their trust, and forfeited the confidence of the country, as Directors of the British and Foreign Bible Society!"

Such is a specimen of the manner in which this opponent of the Parent Institution, supports the cause of separation. Were his cause the right one, it must be injured by the adoption of such means for its establishment. It is quite fitting, indeed, that he who thus prejudges, and sets at nought his brother, should seek to uphold his un-

christian conduct by unchristian acts; but it is really "melancholy and humiliating," that a professed "Master in Israel," should thus demean himself. "Such a man as Haffner!" We freely compassionate the "man" who could write the sentence. The "monstrous dose of flattery" administered by one respected individual, applauding the charitable spirit of a leading member of another denomination, shown by his standing forth to vindicate the injured, and protect the calumniated! Will nothing satisfy the Editor of the Christian Instructor, but waging a crusade of bigotry, against all who differ from him in opinion? Are all the charities of life, and the kind offices of social intercourse, to be immolated on the altar of intolerance, by which he has sworn? We can tell him, that on the other side of the Tweed, whatever it may be here, a man is not shunned as a pestilence, on account of the peculiarity of his faith; it is not there deemed necessary, to stay a man on the threshold, till his belief in the Westminster Confession has been ascertained; and a cup of cold water would not there be refused to any one, albeit he were not able to pronounce the talismanic countersign of the true faith. And though Dr. Pye Smith might not see the necessity of holding "spiritual and praying communion with Mr. Benflower," or any other Christian Unitarian individual or congregation, yet are we sure, that the acquaintance and friendship of BENJAMIN FLOWER would be no disparagement to any man, who can admire in the member of an opposing sect, firm unbending principle, unaffected simplicity, unwearied benevolence, and fearless advocacy of the rights and liberties, improvement and happiness of his fellow-creatures. We were fully aware of the illiberal and unfounded aspersions which the Editor has now reproduced, with the stamp of his own approbation, long since circulated by Mr. Wilberforce, and "a certain friend." With the Unitarians, it has long been a very "small matter, to be judged of man's judgment." Had it been otherwise, they would not have paid much deference to the opinions of what constitutes Christianity, given by one, who has been the constant apologist for war; nor will they sorrow much at being denied the Christian name, by one who has yet to prove his right to sit in judgment on them; and to show his own title to be considered to be one of Christ's disciples, by evincing his Master's spirit. We appeal from the condemnatory asper-

sions of mortality, to the proofs of their incorrectness, which may be found in almost every Unitarian congregation; and one example of which may be read, even in our present Number, to the charter of our emancipation, the New Testament, and to the sentence of our final and righteous Judge.

It was not to be expected, that the Christian Pioneer should escape the notice of the Christian Instructor, and along with any notice, it was to be expected, that "acrimony and abuse," would be accompanied. "The event has verified these anticipations."

"There is also a Unitarian periodical in Glasgow, which rails at the Edinburgh statements as savouring of priestly domination, and many other bad things, and bepraises the Apocrypha as a most interesting and useful volume. And of course it regards the operations of Earl-Street with complacency. This is not at all strange in the authors of such a work. Whatever sets the Canon of Scripture afloat, must be favourable to their speculations. It assists them in making inroads on the integrity of Scripture. It may be instrumental in accomplishing those changes in the New Testament for which they have already made such sacrifices of candour and consistency; and thus it may act as a *Pioneer*, to clear the way to the most licentious Unitarianism, to construct works from which the enemies of Christianity may more easily assail it, and to dig mines for blowing it up as a system of grace and truth, that they may build upon its ruins a temple where even the infidel will not be ashamed to worship."

In reply to these assertions, coming, as they do, from "a quarter where the feelings and characters of others have been held scandalously cheap," as Dr. Wardlaw has well remarked, we refer our readers to the various articles on the Apocrypha, which have already appeared in our Magazine. Had those articles been met by argument, we should have conceived it our duty to answer; but abuse and falsehood, we consider unworthy of any other notice than mere exposure. The conflict between truth and error, is not to be stayed by the use of such missiles. We shall pursue our course, of upholding "the sufficiency of Scripture, the right of individual judgment, and of fearless free inquiry," whatever obloquy may be heaped upon us, or however our *name* may be cast out as evil.

The Newspapers of the day, in giving a sketch of the history of the unfortunate man, White, lately executed in London, have attributed the crimes of which he was convicted, to his study of the works of "Helvetius, Descartes,

Voltaire, Dr. Priestley, and other writers of the same stamp." We are not, of course, acquainted with the facts of the case; but we do know, that the classing the last named writer with those previously named, is a misrepresentation. We gladly give insertion to the following letter; and think it quite right, that when calumnies of this kind are sent forth to the world, some friend of injured virtue should interpose, to shield from defamation the memory of the dead.

"*To the Editor of the Maidstone Journal.*

"SIR,

"FEELING confident that you would not knowingly lend your aid to the dissemination of an atrocious calumny, I trust you will excuse my calling upon you to retract an assertion, which I doubt not was copied inadvertently from some of the London papers into yours. In giving an account of the execution of the unhappy culprit White, you say 'he acknowledged that he had studied Helvetius, Descartes, Voltaire, Dr. Priestley, and other writers of the same stamp.' Now, Sir, the writer of this narrative, whoever he was, either knew, or ought to have known, that Dr. Priestley was by no means a writer "of the same stamp" with Helvetius and Voltaire. As to Descartes, I believe he never published any thing on theological subjects. But, with respect to Dr. Priestley, he has certainly written a great deal on such topics; but so far from having said, or even hinted any thing to the prejudice of Divine Revelation, the whole of his writings, relative to such subjects, have a directly opposite tendency. He wrote much and well in defence of Christianity, though his views of its nature and design differed materially from those which are generally received. As an antidote to this vile aspersion, permit me to quote a short passage, relative to this writer, from a celebrated divine of the Church of England, and another from an orthodox dissenter.

"The late Dr. Parr, in his letters to the inhabitants of Birmingham, says, 'Let Dr. Priestley indeed be confuted where he is mistaken. Let him be exposed where he is superficial. Let him be repressed where he is dogmatical. Let him be rebuked where he is censorious. But let not his attainments be depreciated, because they are numerous almost without a parallel. Let not his talents be ridiculed, because they are superlatively great. Let not his morals

be vilified, because they are correct without austerity, and exemplary without ostentation.'

"The Rev. Robert Hall, in a controversy with Mr. Clayton, speaking of Dr. Priestley, says, 'I should be sorry to suffer any difference of sentiment to diminish my sensibility to virtue or my admiration of genius. From him the poisoned arrow will fall pointless. His enlightened and active mind—his unwearied assiduity—the extent of his researches—the light he has poured into almost every department of science, will be the admiration of that period, when the greater part of those who have favoured, or those who have opposed him, will be alike forgotten.'

"I am, SIR, with respect, your very obedient Servant,

"*MAIDSTONE, 13th Jan.* 1827. R. A."

Two periodical works on religious subjects, have lately commenced in this City, "the Gospel Communicator, or Philanthropist's Journal;" and "the Religious Observer." The former Magazine is devoted to the promotion of the belief of the doctrine of Universal Restoration, and is the continuation of a work which has been suspended, from various causes, for seventeen months, and of which two volumes have been previously published. With the object which the editor states he has in view, "the improvement of the human mind in the investigation of Scripture truth, connecting the glory of the Creator with the final felicity of the intelligent creation," we heartily coincide, and wish him God speed. The Universalist Societies in Scotland, entertain the views, we believe, which distinguished Elhanan Winchester. American Universalism, on the contrary, limits the punishment of the wicked to the present state. Both views we consider unscriptural; the one, in not founding the doctrine of the restoration of the whole human race to purity and happiness, on the basis of the free, unpurchased mercy of Jehovah: and the other, in its opposition to the present state, as a scene of probation, and of every man being apportioned in a future one "according to the deeds done in the body, whether they have been good or whether they have been evil." "The Religious Observer," we presume we may conclude, has been set on foot to counteract the operations of "The Christian Pioneer." Its "Projectors," in their "Address," "confess, that their immediate purpose is to rescue, if possible,

the capital of the West of Scotland, and the surrounding districts, from the discredit, under which they have for some time laboured, of being without a single legitimate periodical to support, to guard, and to defend the Cause of Gospel Truth, and the Divine Character and Authority of Christian Revelation. They blush with shame and indignation for Glasgow and her truly Christian population, when they reflect on the fact, that the only publication which appears periodically, professing to be of a religious character, is from the spurious press of the Unitarians. It is with grief they have observed, that in a religious age, and in a religious community, the enemy hath the whole field to himself; and that, while he saps and undermines insidiously with a view to destroy, the real watchmen of Zion sleep supinely and unmindfully upon their posts. How little worthy of Glasgow and her sons is such cold-hearted indifference, such frigid faith, such lukewarm attention to the interests of true Christianity! To wipe away the stigma or the disgrace, as it is in the meantime one of the main objects, so it may ultimately be the triumph, of the projectors of The Religious Observer."

Passing over the assumption of infallibility, which this Address exhibits, more in accordance, we think, with Rome, than with the "Presbyterianism of the New Testament," and leaving the "Projectors" in undisputed possession of the feeling which dictated it; we are happy in seeing the increase of works, in which religion is discussed. For though we do not augur much that is friendly to free inquiry, from a publication whose "projectors," not satisfied with announcing themselves as "uncompromising adherents of that system of doctrinal religious truth, which recognises the Bible *alone*, as the only admissible standard of faith," nevertheless, conceive it indispensable to add, that "they *also* stedfastly maintain the principles taught in the Westminster Assembly's Shorter Catechism;" yet we rejoice, that a chance is thus given of keeping religion constantly before the minds of the public; satisfied as we are, that Truth must gain from the collision of opinions, and that the utmost latitude of investigation, can ultimately lead only to the discomfiture of error.

THE

CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

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Plain Thoughts addressed to a Country Congregation.

"AND, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"—Luke x. 25.

The intention of the lawyer, in putting this question, seems to be different from that of the young man mentioned in chapter xviii. The same question is proposed in both instances, and the answer to both is the same. The young man appears to be sincere in his inquiry; but the lawyer's question seems to be captious, and designed to ensnare. "A certain lawyer stood up, and *tempted* him." He starts a question, in order, if possible, to find some flaw in the answer—some error in doctrine, of which he might take advantage, and turn the words of the teacher against himself. To this question, our Saviour very properly replied, "What is written in the law, how readest thou?" As if he had said, thou who art a teacher of the law, must know what it enjoins—how readest thou? "And he answering, said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself; and Jesus said, Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live." The answer of Jesus, shows that the lawyer was well instructed in his duty, for he assures him, that in the performance of the duties required by the law, he would not fail of obtaining life everlasting; but he, willing to justify himself—perhaps wishing to display his talents, perplex the subject, or entangle Jesus—said, "And who is my neighbour?"

Had Jesus replied, that every man ought to be considered in the light of a neighbour and a brother, the answer, though just, might have given room and scope for cavil. What, am I to treat an enemy like a friend? shall I associate with publicans and sinners? can I have any dealings with a vile Samaritan? But, to this second question of the lawyer, Jesus, instead of giving a direct answer,

introduces a very affecting incident—an incident related in the most simple but impressive manner—an incident which carries conviction to the heart. We presume not to add to the excellence of the passage, our aim shall be, to point out a few of its more obvious beauties. "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves." The road from Jerusalem to Jericho, is said to have been much infested with robbers; by such lawless banditti this traveller was attacked, and treated with inhuman barbarity: "They stripped him of his raiment, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half-dead." While thus he lay naked and helpless, stretched on the ground, a Priest chanced to come down that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side! A Priest—yea, a Priest of the Most High God—of that God who desires mercy and not sacrifice. And did so much suffering call for help in vain? could it not move compassion? no: his heart was steeled, he passed regardless on! And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place:—the Levite approached and took a nearer view, to satisfy curiosity, not to give relief; and when he had surveyed the unhappy object, he also, like the Priest, pursued his journey, unmindful of a brother in distress! See, here, a Priest and Levite destitute of humanity, ignorant of the character of that God whom they pretended to serve. Unfeeling men! did ye not know that mercy is a duty of primary importance, and that no service is more acceptable to God, than that which is beneficial to man? "But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow, when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." It was kindly done. The generous Samaritan, overlooking national prejudices, discharged a debt due to humanity, and did that for a Jew, which a Jew would scarcely have done for a Samaritan. He did not stop to deliberate to what country the unhappy person might belong, but guided as it were by an instinctive impulse, he acted from the native benevolence of his heart. The instant he perceives a fellow creature in distress, he alights, and hastens to his

aid, and, after binding up his wounds, conducts him to an inn. Surely we may also suppose, that the same person who applied oil and wine to his wounds, would not fail to administer the balm of consolation to his mind: he spares no labour or expense to procure whatever could mitigate pain or alleviate distress. On the morrow, he defrays every charge, commits the care of his patient to the landlord, with an injunction to take care of him; and, what adds more to his generosity, he allows him an unlimited credit, saying, whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Here is a narrative the most beautiful and perspicuous: the different characters are finely drawn and well supported—a master's hand appears throughout the whole. Who does not blame the criminal negligence of the Priest and Levite? who does not feel the glow of sympathy, when he turns his eye to the good Samaritan? The Priest and Levite, we regard as men dead to feeling, and unworthy of their sacred office; the Samaritan, a name infamous to a Jew, performs an act of humanity which a Jew might be proud to imitate. In the first instance, we behold the form of religion without the power; in the second, genuine worth free from ostentation. "Which of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour to him that fell among the thieves?" This plain question resolves the point: here is no room for evasion: the question admits but of one reply: the lawyer is constrained to answer, "He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise." In this command, the improvement of the subject is comprehended. Mercy is the grand doctrine of the Gospel, and is an express condition of our acceptance with God. Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses. An offending brother, when penitent, we must forgive, till seventy and seven times. Our love to God, can only be shown by doing good to man; for if we love not a brother whom we have seen, how can we love God whom we have not seen?

Our Saviour, in his account of the final retribution, rests the awful decision, on the kind and benevolent affections alone, a kindness done to the least of his disciples, he accounts as done to himself; but inasmuch as ye did it not to the least of my brethren, ye did it not to me. He who pursued his fellow servant with unrelenting

severity, had his Lord's clemency revoked with regard to himself, and was subjected to the same punishment which he had inflicted on another. "To err, is human; to forgive, divine." But he that showeth no mercy, shall have judgment at last without mercy; for the measure which we mete, shall be measured to us again. The Supreme Ruler of the universe, rejoices over all his works to do them good, and must delight to see his rational offspring resemble himself. "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father in heaven is merciful." Let us, then, be careful to cherish the kind and benevolent affections; to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. As workers together with God, may we study to smooth the rugged paths of adversity to each other, and, as much as possible, to lessen the portion of human ills. When a brother is struggling with adversity, and perishing with want, be it then thy care to alleviate his distress. Shut not up the bowels of your compassion, nor hide thyself from thine own flesh. Let no selfish motive contract the current of benevolence, but let it flow like a stream to quench the thirsty soul. So the blessing of him that is ready to perish, shall come upon thee; thou shalt reap a great and a sure reward; thou shalt derive from thence, an enjoyment of the purest and most exalted kind. To preclude all evil, is not in the power of man; suffering is the lot of humanity, and, under the government of God, is productive of good. But let it be remembered, that vice and misery are the same, and that to check the one, will prevent the other; that men by their misconduct, are too often the cause of their own misery, cannot be doubted, and it is but just that they should suffer for their folly. The laws of nature, which are the laws of God, cannot be transgressed with impunity; it is a necessary part of the present system, and a wise appointment of Providence, that men should feel the cousequences of their crimes, in order that they may be led to repentance and reformation. The sufferings of the profligate and vicious, may and ought to excite our commiseration, so far as to supply the wants of the present moment; but it is not required of us, that we should support them in their course of folly and extravagance. But if vice excite our pity, surely virtue has a double claim to our regard; and if the wicked may receive compassion sevenfold, truly the righteous seventy and seven-fold.

Let this reflection, then, sink deep into our minds,—that the greatest elevation of rank, may, in the revolution of events, soon be levelled with the dust—that all earthly possession, is, in its nature, unstable and insecure—and that no man can tell how soon it may be his lot to depend on the bounty of another. From this consideration, learn compassion; wherever real misfortune is found, when wretchedness meets thine eye, or the cry of distress assails thine ear, suffer not these to plead in vain, remember the good Samaritan, and go thou and do likewise.

CARLUKE. W. R.

On the Canon of Scripture.

(Continued from page 148.)

WE begin with the Inspiration of Christ. *It* was of the highest order. We are expressly told by John the Baptist, "that he (Jesus) speaketh the words of God; for God giveth not the spirit *by measure* unto him." And again, "He that cometh from heaven is *above all*, and what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth." Our Lord asserts the same thing of himself. "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth in me, should not abide in darkness."—"For I have not spoken of myself, but the Father who sent me; he gave me a commandment, what I should say and what I should speak." "Whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." And again, "For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth him *all things* that himself doeth." In these passages of the Gospels, and in many others of similar import, Jesus distinctly declares the unqualified divine authority of his doctrine.

Now, we believe his testimony on this subject, for two reasons; first, because we perceive from his history, that he was a person of an upright and enlightened mind, and entirely free from all superstition and fanaticism; and secondly, because God bore ample testimony to the truth of his assertions, by the miraculous works which he enabled him to perform. If it be questioned, whether the inspiration or divine guidance of Christ, in matters of knowledge, extended beyond what was strictly connected with the immediate object of his mission, the reply is, that it is of no moment for us to discuss that point; because, it is very remarkable, that, in point of fact, he carefully con-

fined his teaching to matters concerning "the kingdom of heaven," and to them alone. He evaded many questions that were put to him, on other topics, with admirable prudence. Witness, among others, the instances of the Jews who brought before him the woman taken in adultery, and of his reply to the insidious question about the propriety of paying tribute to Cæsar.

It is enough for our present design to know, that on all topics of religion, his inspiration was undoubtedly *plenary*. What it was in other respects, is a question that may indeed affect our ideas of his peculiar character, or of his person, as it is usually styled in theological writings; but we prosecute our inquiry, without the slightest regard to any theory concerning the person of Christ. It is proper to advert to this, in the outset, because some of your readers may be prejudiced one way, and some another, by the supposed tendency of my design, to support one or other of the systems usually received on that subject. I declare that the *design* has nothing to do with that matter; and if, in the conclusion, it should throw any light on that subject, it will be only accidental, and in the way that every particular truth has a tendency to illustrate all truths.

But to return: we have said that the inspiration of Christ was of the highest order, and in all things relating to the divine will, character, and government (the proper subjects of his religion), it was *plenary*. It remains, however, to inquire, whether this plenary inspiration extended to the very words, or to the general spirit and meaning of his doctrine, and how far we have reason to presume, there can be any difference in these views of the matter?

And, here it is worthy of remark, that our Lord did not commit his doctrine to *writing* himself. He delivered it orally; and it was preserved by tradition, and propagated by verbal communication, for *many years before it was written* at all. The very earliest date which has ever been assigned for the writing of the first Gospel (Matthew), was eight years after the Ascension of Christ: but that opinion rests on no very good authority. Another opinion, that it was fifteen years, is more probable; but if we credit a very ancient tradition of the early centuries, that none of the Gospels were written till the Apostles were growing old, and become desirous of leaving a record in writing of their doctrines, in the prospect of being removed from the Church, either by the course of nature, or by

some external calamity,—in this view, we shall fix upon a still later period for the publication of the Gospels.

Without pretending to fix a point, however, upon which the learned are not agreed, we may observe, that, whatever the exact period of their publication was, the subject-matter of their contents had been extensively circulated, and considered *to be sufficiently known* in the Church, before it was committed to writing. This is clear, from the preface of Luke's Gospel. He does not profess to narrate things which were better known to himself than to many others; but on the contrary, he was about to write "those things which are most surely believed among us,—even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word," in order that his friend Theophilus might better know "the certainty of those things in which he had been (previously) instructed."

We infer from these facts, that our Lord considered his Doctrine to be capable of being transmitted and preserved by oral communication; that he designed it to be so communicated, for a length of time, and therefore he put it into such a form, and conveyed it in such terms, as were suitable for that purpose. When we examine the Gospels, in this view, we behold manifold intrinsic evidences of the same design. His moral precepts are all conveyed in very strong and pointed sayings, the *letter* of which could not be readily *forgot*. This characteristic is so striking, that it appears to many people, on first view, as a sort of exaggeration of his real meaning. A better account of the matter, is, that he intended to exhibit his peculiar principles of morality distinct by themselves, without condescending on any of those modifications which *temporary* necessity might *excuse;* but by which, he would never consent to compromise the general authority of his precepts, on the ground of their being impracticable or overstrained. But be this as it may, his moral precepts are abundantly pithy, short, and peculiar,—such as could not be easily forgot or misrepresented, so long as men professed to give them *in his own words*.

As to *his own* illustrations of his moral principles, they consisted of parables equally framed to strike the imagination, and be retained easily by the memory. His theology was likewise simple. In regard to the character of God—it was what the Jews were already grounded in—what

the philosophers had begun to imagine—and what reason, when once awakened and illumined, never fails to recognise and to keep, *viz.* "That there is One God, the Maker of all things, almighty, righteous, merciful, and pure." His doctrine concerning the resurrection—the future judgment—the rule and the results of it—no person, once told of them, could forget. Respecting his own peculiar character and office—it was unique—there is no analogy to it, and there has consequently appeared some difficulty in comprehending or explaining it. But there is no difficulty in remembering what *he himself* said of it. On all these topics of theology, as well as on those of his morality, he illustrates his meaning, not by lengthy arguments and metaphysical niceties, but by popular parables, and similitudes, and striking expressions, which serve to place the matter in various points of view, and associate it with ideas familiar or interesting to our minds.

The number of our Lord's ideas, and the details of his doctrine (that is, as *he chooses* to present them), are not very great; and he does not scruple, upon different occasions, to *repeat* them; but when he does so, it is under some varied figure or expression, or as connected with some new incident of his life or conversations. Upon the whole view of the subject, his teaching was admirably and designedly adapted for the purpose of being preserved, and communicated by word of mouth, from man to man; and to be translated and expressed, in one language or another, without danger of being lost, or misapprehended in the transit. I speak of what *he said* and what *he did:* as to the inferences which we are entitled to draw from these premises, or the amplifications which we are authorised to make of them—that is another question, which does not concern us at present.

But to come to the purpose of these remarks: I conclude from them, that the inspiration which we are to look for in the doctrine of Christ, does not lie in, or extend to, the *very words;* but is to be sought for, in the general spirit and meaning, or idea, of his discourses. And when I say this, I do not mean to deny, that even his very words (when there is only one version of them) are not to be esteemed *inspired;* and that, too, in their plainest sense. I only mean, that he who possessed the highest and most complete inspiration, *chose*, for good reasons, to use a loose, varied, and sometimes figurative phraseology,

to drive us away from a servile regard to *words*, and fix our attention upon *things*, as he himself once said to the Jews when they were offended at some of his expressions, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh [the letter of that particular discourse] profiteth nothing."

The drift of these observations, however, will be better understood, by comparing this popular mode of our Lord's teaching, with the verbal precision and metaphysical niceties of after times,—when his professed followers assumed the right of improving and defining his doctrine more accurately—when the Roman empire was split into two factions, and carried on the most rancorous and bloody hostilities, about the use of a syllable (*oi*)* in the coining of a Greek word to express their opinions about the divine essence—when the fate of nations was influenced, at the Reformation, by a question concerning the difference of *tran*-substantiation and *con*-substantiation—and when the everlasting happiness or misery of Christians, was asserted to depend upon their assent to such propositions as, "that we worship One God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity—neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance—the Father Almighty, the Son Almighty, the Holy Ghost Almighty, yet not three Almighties! The Son is an Eternal Person—Jesus, born of Mary, is a Human Person—but these joined are only One Person,—One altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by Unity of Person!" We say nothing about the abstract accuracy of such definitions, but we advert to the immense difference observable in the *style* of such doctrine from that of our Lord.

The above instances are but a specimen of that quibbling philosophy, which overspread Europe in the dark ages, and which occupied the whole attention of the learned world about *a war of words*, without making the slightest progress in the knowledge of *things*. There might be a mixture of truth and nonsense in many of those speculations, which it is not our business to discriminate; but certainly it required thousands of volumes to contain *such* doctrine. *It* never could have been propagated or preserved by *oral* communication, and that, too, of persons wholly unacquainted with the subtleties of philosophy—perhaps incapable of comprehending them. And the conclusion I come to, is this:—That the subjects of the in-

* Homoousios, Homoiousios.

spired teaching of Jesus Christ—the matter of his revelation to man, did not consist of things which were hard to be understood and difficult to be remembered, requiring a critical nicety in being reported or translated; but, on the contrary, it consisted of plain facts and truths, which a man might hear, and remember, and tell, after a lapse of several years, without the risk of mistake.* Or, if one person should mistake or forget, the error could be easily corrected, by comparing the testimony of others having the same general character. Consequently, the Revelation of Jesus Christ, consists in the general idea, rather than in specific forms of expression, and the words are to be regarded simply as the vehicle of that idea. The idea, no doubt, is to be learned from the words he originally used, and which were suitable to the conception and conveyance of it at the time, and under the circumstances, he spoke; but they may be varied, so as to become more or less suitable in different circumstances.

Let no man think that these remarks are made, with any view of an after-pleading, in favour of an indefinite latitude in the interpretation of our Lord's words: quite the contrary; the simplicity and plainness of the *matter* (contended for) is the strongest argument for understanding his words, in the plainest sense they will admit of, subject only to that rule which nobody denies, "of comparing one scripture with another." But such a view of our Lord's words, as we have been taking, certainly supersedes a vast quantity of learned disputation and minute criticism. We are thankful to the learned for their translations of the Gospels, and we take the *concurrence* of their testimony, as we do that of the original witnesses, for evidence that Christ did, and said, such and such things; but having thus come in contact with our Master himself, we ought to form our own judgment of his words and actions. We need not distract ourselves with the contradictory commentaries of the learned, nor burden our memories with their amplifications and refinements. We have one Master, and because we revere him above all the Doctors of Israel, whether ancient or modern, therefore we will adhere to his words and to his sentiments, as containing the *highest* authority and the *clearest* exposition of what God hath been pleased to reveal to man on the subject of religion.

* I do not depreciate the constant and minute study of the Gospels; I speak only of the general principles or elements of the Christian doctrine.

This view which we have taken of the subject, likewise establishes a distinction between the inspiration of Christ, whose memoirs the Evangelists wrote, and the alleged inspiration of the Evangelists themselves. The Evangelists were only the historians of an inspired person, and of a divine revelation made by him; they were not, in their capacity of historians, inspired themselves. When, therefore, we say that the Gospels are inspired books of the highest order and authority, we say so, because the subject matter of them consists chiefly of the words and actions of Jesus—the Anointed—or Inspired.

When the Evangelists relate any thing else, we are to receive what they say, not as matter of inspiration, but of history, and attach that consequence only to it which its nature and evidence require. The idea of the Evangelists being *inspired writers*, is quite inconsistent with what Luke says of "his treatise" the verity of which, he grounds expressly upon his access to the best sources of information, through the ordinary medium of the testimony and concurrent report of eye and ear witnesses. He was not an Apostle, nor is he known to us as having possessed any supernatural gifts.

It was the same with Mark, who, according to an ancient tradition in the Church, was a personal attendant on Peter, and wrote his Gospel as a memorandum of what that Apostle was in the habit of teaching: in which repect, his authority as a writer, is just equivalent to that of a short-hand writer or reporter of modern times.

Matthew, indeed, was an Apostle; but whatever might be the *official* authority of the Apostleship in other matters, of which we shall afterwards speak, the credit more especially due to him, as a historian of our Lord's life and doctrine, arises solely from his having been a personal attendant on him; what he heard and saw, that he testified—and *inspiration* regarding such a matter, was equally unnecessary for *his* information, or for *our* belief of his testimony.

Besides, let any man read the Gospel of Matthew and the Gospel of Luke under this view, and he will be unable to discern any marked superiority or difference in the narratives of the Apostle, and of the Physician. They relate some different incidents, and so far extend our information and confirm our belief, because they exhibit a unity of character and doctrine in the subject of their memoirs; but it cannot be alleged, that Matthew's Gospel, is, by virtue of

any apostolical inspiration, preferable, upon the whole, to Luke's. That is to say, in other words, inspiration has nothing to do with the composition of his history.

With regard to John, as he wrote at a much later period, and has given us chiefly a number of discourses and conversations of his Master, we may have no doubt that he enjoyed the benefit of that inspiration, which was expressly promised to the Apostles;—that at a due and proper time, "the Spirit would bring all things to their remembrance, whatsoever he had taught them:"—but this was only restoring to his memory, what was formerly in it, and enabling him, at a distance of sixty years, to write down the discourses and conversations of Jesus, with the same accuracy as if he had made notes of them at the time of their delivery. The character of his testimony, was still the same as that of the earlier historians; it rested on what he had heard, and seen.

It is worthy of remark, that Paul, some part of whose information might be *revealed* to him, and who was the most literary of the Apostles, did not write a Gospel; and it is by no means improbable, that this was designedly ruled by Providence, to show that our faith was required, on the ground of those principles of evidence, which, to the human mind, must always appear the more strong and unquestionable, *viz.* the testimony of men's ordinary senses.

Lastly, upon the subject of the Gospels:—the view we have taken of them, saves us from all the cavillings of sceptics about small discrepances, or even errors, in the histories of the Evangelists. Such discrepances are found in the most authentic and modern histories of public events; but who ever doubts of the general facts of recent history, on account of the minor variations of witnesses or reporters? On the contrary, their agreement in the main facts, as observed by different persons in different positions, and having no concert with each other, is rather confirmed by those shades of differences in the narrative, which prove that they could not be under the influence of a common delusion. Henry the Fourth of France, was assassinated in open day, in a public street in Paris, while some of his nobles were in the carriage with him, and his guards at hand; and yet, in the precognitions taken immediately after the event, the witnesses differed in a number of small particulars.

INQUISITOR.

The Glories of Creation.

Hunc solem, et stellas, et decedentia certis
Tempora momentis, sunt qui, formidine nulla
Imbuti, spectent. *Hor.*

ARISE, arise! it is not meet
To crouch for riches to the ground:—
A glorious world is at our feet;
Ten thousand hang around!

Look up! a vault of vivid blue!
A moving orb of living fire!
Mountains of clouds careering through,
In gorgeous attire!

Look down! resplendent is the sight
Of flood and mountain—sea and land:—
An ocean, lashing in its might!
An earth, in beauty, bland!

Valleys of green and hills of snow,
Meadows and forests, flowers and trees;
And rivers, murmuring as they flow,
To the wild warbling breeze!

Beauties on beauties, in a ring
Of ever-varying richness, throng;
While summer—autumn—winter—spring—
Go hand in hand along!

Look up, look up—once and again!
The moon is coming from the deep!
And stars on stars, to grace her train,
Are starting from their sleep!

Glory on glory! the great sky
Trembles with splendour! and a flow
Of hallow'd radiance, from on high,
Encircles all below!

O God, O God, the sin forgive
Of being callous to the bliss,
Of feeling that we breathe and live
In such a world as this!

Glasgow, Feb. 1827.

On Unitarians attending Trinitarian Worship.

Amongst the unanswerable objections to all religious establishments, it is by no means the least, that they subject the conscience to very great temptations to insincerity and prevarication. Presenting very powerful inducements to those who disapprove of the doctrines by law established, to continue in the communion of the Church, Christians frequently make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, by bowing the knee to those who are not, in their opinion, entitled to religious worship, and by openly countenancing, what they regard as gross corruptions of Christianity. In towns, or villages, where there is a Unitarian chapel, believers in the simple Unity of the Deity, are unquestionably guilty of a heinous sin by joining in Trinitarian worship. This is so evident to every single-hearted man, that it would be a waste of words to enlarge upon it. But, at present, I put the case of a Unitarian living without the reach of a place of worship dedicated to the service of the One true God, and shall endeavour to show, that he cannot consistently attend a church, the doctrines of which are Trinitarian. Religion is a subject of paramount importance. God is an infinitely great, wise, and holy Being: he is a Spirit, and can be worshipped acceptably, only when he is worshipped in spirit and in truth. When we think seriously of the attributes of the omniscient Deity, our minds are oppressed with a sense of the great and adorable perfections of his nature; we feel our comparative littleness, and we perceive the great condescension of the Supreme Being, in permitting us to call upon his holy name, and in assuring us that he favourably regards the devout homage, the sincere supplications of his obedient offspring. How shall man present himself before this awful, this infinitely great, and heart-searching God? What does reason dictate? Surely, that we should come before him with the profoundest reverence, with an undivided and undistracted heart, with singleness of mind. All the energies of the soul should be called into full exercise, and all our reverence, all our external homage, and all our internal devotion, be entirely directed to the only God, who will not give his glory to another. The Supreme Being set apart a peculiar people, to whom he gave peculiar laws, and to whom many prophets were sent for the express purpose of preserving his worship entire and

undivided. All the prophets bore testimony to the important truth which our Lord solemnly confirmed. Mark xii. 29, 30, "And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all* thy heart, and with *all* thy soul, and with *all* thy mind, and with *all* thy strength. This is the first commandment." Mat. iv. 10, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him *only* shalt thou serve." To unite in the worship of any other being, or person called god, is false worship, is an express violation of the first commandment, is, in fact, idolatry. The Unitarian who bows the knee to false gods, who unites in worship addressed to Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, is guilty of no small offence against the supremacy of the Father, if there is any truth in the representations of Holy Writ. Where is the godly simplicity, where is the godly sincerity of the Unitarian, who joins in a service which, to him, must appear idolatrous? Sophistry puts in the following plea: Though I go to a Trinitarian church, and put on the semblance of joining in Trinitarian worship, yet I guard against idolatry, by taking care to confine my adorations to the One true God, the Father. Whilst the minister is declaring, that Christ is the Almighty God, and is addressing distinctly, and separately, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, I immediately *repress* my devout feelings, and salve my conscience by inwardly *protesting* against forbidden worship. Though I put on the *appearance* of devotion, whilst the glory which is due to the Father only, is transferred to others superstitiously named gods, yet I guard my heart from the impiety of idolatry, by inwardly condemning that worship in which I apparently join, and which I countenance by my presence. The sophistry and impiety of this plea, appear from the following considerations: When we are in the Temple of God, and engaged in public worship, "we must lift up our *heart* with our hands, and call upon our souls, and all that is within us, to bless God's holy name." "My heart," exclaims the pious Psalmist, "is fixed, my heart is fixed." This concentration of the understanding and the feelings, is essential to the acceptable worship of him who is a Spirit, and who is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth. But, how can the mind which is kept on the alert to make this separation and distinction between the objects of the established wor-

ship, offer an undivided and undistracted heart to the Supreme Being? Either the religious feelings become confused in the anxiety to avoid the sin of worshipping those who are not entitled to religious homage, or, the mind is guilty of idolatry, by thoughtlessly uniting in prayers and praises not addressed to the only proper object of religious worship. The Unitarian joining in Trinitarian religious services, cannot vindicate his conduct from the charge of idolatry and hypocrisy. The plea which he urges would have justified the primitive Christians in saving their lives, by throwing a few grains of incense on the heathen altars, joining in heathen sacrifices, and invoking heathen gods. Under the names of Jupiter and Apollo, they might have pleaded, that they invoked the Supreme Being, and that they inwardly protested against all idolatrous services. Protestants might, on the same plea, unite in the religious worship of the Church of Rome. The virgin Mary and Christ, are equally improper objects of devout supplication and adoration. Protestants might, on the same principle, bow down before the consecrated images of the Catholic Church, and thus give their countenance to all the superstitious forms and idolatrous practices of Heathenism under the name of Christianity. On the same plea, all dissent from the long established Church of Rome, may be proved to have been not only unnecessary, but also highly prejudicial to the interests of Christianity. Presbyterianism, on the same principle, may be shown to be founded on an obstinate, a ridiculous, and rebellious opposition to Prelacy and Episcopacy. On the same principle, it would be proper for a Christian in Turkey, to join in the service of the Mosque; and in India, to unite in the worship of her million gods. Admit that a Unitarian may join in Trinitarian worship, and the same principle would justify an outward conformity to the established religion of every country through which a man should travel. There is no medium. There is no middle path between right and wrong; between religion and irreligion. Religion will not admit of prevarication and mental reservations. The notion that a Unitarian may, under any circumstances, join in Trinitarian worship, is as untenable and intolerable, as that a Christian may join in the services of an idol's temple. No created being can come in competition with the almighty and everlasting Father of all. The injunction against the worship of any

other than the one true God, is applicable to all creatures without any distinction. A Unitarian may as consistently join in the worship of the mass, or the virgin Mary, or any heathen deity, as the worship of Jesus Christ or the Holy Spirit. It matters not who is the person, or what is the object, if it be any other than the King of kings, the Lord of lords; of him, and through him, and to him, are all things, to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

(To be Continued.)

To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.

SIR,

"FOR where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."—Mat. xviii. 20.

If I understand the communication of Philo-Veritas, in No. 5, page 172, this passage is produced, on the assumption, that it proves the Omnipresence of Christ, because Christians may be met in numberless places of the world, at the very same point of time, and separated by thousands of miles, and yet, according to this passage, Christ is in the midst of each of these meetings, which is not possible if he was or is a local being; therefore, he must be Omnipresent. Such is the Trinitarian view of this passage, and such would be the fair, just, and only conclusion, if the *personal* presence of Christ was meant.

But, if Christ was omnipresent, he would be with *one*, as much as with two or three, and would be in the midst of Jewish, Mahometan, or Pagan assemblies, as well as Christian. Then, why does it require two or three Christians, before Christ be in the midst of them? Take the connection of the preceding verse, and the reason appears plain:—in verse 19th, our Lord assures his followers, "that if two of them agree to ask any thing, his Father would do it for them." And why would the Father do it for them? The 20th verse says why,—"FOR (or because) where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Now, on the Trinitarian view of this verse, where is the propriety of the reason assigned for answering the request? Would the invisible, personal presence of Christ be a guarantee against an improper request being made, or would it ensure an answer to an improper request? most certainly it would do neither; therefore, in this view, there is no affinity between the assurance given and the reason assigned,

and consequently this cannot have been the meaning of our Lord. But if we understand that his virtual presence is meant, that it is the Spirit of Christ—that it is Christianity which would be in the midst of them—then we see how he would be in the midst of two or three, more than one,—because, the most perfect Christian has some defect, and an individual might be inclined to prefer an improper request; but where there are a number, although defective individually, it will most likely be in different points—and where one is weak, another will be strong—where one is bound by prejudice, or tempted by peculiar circumstances, another will be free: and thus, by taking the virtues of the whole, Christianity will be more perfect than in any one: and thus, an improper request proposed by an individual, would be modified according to the spirit of Christianity, by his brethren; and this is the reason why the Father would answer it—this is the guarantee tacitly included in verse 20, *viz.* this, That where two or three agree to ask, their request will be in the spirit of Christianity, and thus Christ is in the *midst of them*, in the same sense, as the Apostles *preached* Jesus Christ, otherwise Christianity, Acts v. 42,—and Paul, 2 Cor. iv. 5, and Gal. i. 16;—and in the same sense, as Christ himself says to his Disciples, John xv. 4, "Abide in me," otherwise Christianity, "and I," *viz.* Christianity, "in you." It would be insulting the understanding of the reader, to suppose, our Lord meant they were to abide in his person, or his person in them, or that the Apostles preached his person.

This view explains why Christ is not in the assemblies of Jews, Mahometans, and Pagans. This view establishes a harmony between the 19th and 20th verses, and harmonizes with the current language of the Bible; and instead of wresting this passage to a sectarian purpose, I think it may be more profitably employed by attending to the impressive lesson of charity, which, in my opinion, it is so eminently calculated to teach: for, how many Christians deny the truth contained in this passage; almost all sects (except Unitarians) say, that not only two or three, but that hundreds, ay, thousands, ay, even millions, have gathered, and do gather themselves together, in the name of Christ, but that he was and is *not* amongst them. Catholics say so of Protestants, and Protestants of Catholics, and of one another. Far be the uncharitable thought from our bosoms. Notwithstanding the gross errors which

have been and still are incorporated with Christianity, I trust, that, even in its grossest forms, it was a blessing to the world, compared with the Pagan systems it supplanted —and that, in all ages, and among all sects of the Christian church, there have been and still are multitudes, who sincerely gathered, and gather themselves together, in the name of Christ, and that, in the words of our Lord, he was and is in the midst of them.

Paisley, 22d Jan. 1827. R. P. X.

Methodist Unitarians.

In the Christian Pioneer for October, page 70, occur the following observations:—

"We have pleasure in stating, that the Lancashire and Cheshire Unitarian Missionary Society, who are desirous of engaging a competent person, as a Missionary, have, lately, secured the services, for three months, of Mr. John Ashworth of Newchurch, Rossendale, Lancashire. This praiseworthy man has long been engaged in preaching, with other meritorious fellow-labourers, to the Congregations at Newchurch, Rochdale, Oldham, Padiham, Rawtonstall, and Todmorden; and is the author of a most interesting account of the rise and progress of the Unitarian doctrine in these Societies, formerly in connexion with the Wesleyan Methodists. They became Unitarians, solely from the perusal of the Bible, and judging for themselves."

This statement seems to have excited no little attention, and has led, amongst other things, to the subsequent correspondence.

"*To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.*

"Dear Sir, Glasgow, 2d Feb. 1827.

"In consequence of your having insinuated, in your Journal for October, that the Methodists in Newchurch, Rochdale, Todmorden, &c. had become Unitarians, I felt it my duty to write to one of our Ministers in Rochdale, to ascertain how far your statement was correct; and in answer, received the inclosed Letter, which I submit to you for your own information; and shall then be greatly obliged, by your inserting the whole in your *next* Journal, or at *least*, the paragraphs marked with *red ink*. And I hope, Sir, your regard for *truth*, and love of "fearless free inquiry," will induce you to comply with my reasonable request. Should this be done in a satisfactory manner, I shall not further notice the incorrect statements in the 'Pioneer;' but on *your* refusing to correct those mistakes, I shall then give publicity to the whole case (with additional information) through *another* medium.

"Wishing you every mercy,

"I remain, Dear Sir, respectfully yours,

"J. HOBSON."

We feel obliged to the Rev. J. Hobson for his good wishes, and sincerely reciprocate them. We can assure him, we needed no threat to induce us to publish either his own or the Rev. Barnard Slater's letter. Our object *is* the promotion of *Truth*, and, we are satisfied, that object will be best effected, both in this and in every other instance, by "fearless free inquiry" and the most mature investigation. It is evident, we think, that Mr. Hobson has misunderstood the paragraph which has called forth his remarks; and that it is this misunderstanding, coupled with the genuine and remarkable facts of the case, which has roused the ire of his Rochdale brother. Mr. Hobson asserts, that we had "insinuated" in our Magazine, "that THE *Methodists* in Newchurch, Rochdale, Todmorden, &c. had become Unitarians." We neither asserted nor insinuated any such thing. What we did say, was, that Mr. Ashworth was "the author of a most interesting account of the rise and progress of the Unitarian doctrine in these Societies, formerly in connexion with the Wesleyan Methodists." And this statement we still believe to be substantially correct. We might, perhaps, have more properly said, "these Societies, *formerly* in connexion with the Rev. Joseph Cooke," and the mass of whose members were, *formerly*, Wesleyan Methodists; but we never imagined that any person could think, that we were asserting that the *present* Methodist Societies had become Unitarians. We are glad, however, that the paragraph has occasioned the additional notice that will now be given to the history of the Methodist Unitarians, for we are confident that no person can reflect on the circumstances attending their conversion, without having his mind deeply impressed, and led, we should hope, to a more serious and dispassionate inquiry after "the truth as it is in Jesus." We cannot, perhaps, indulge the expectation, that Mr. Hobson will be *satisfied* with the insertion of these Letters, but we assure him he cannot, if he wishes to promote Unitarianism, do better than "give publicity to the whole case."

"*The Rev. John Hobson, Methodist Chapel, Glasgow.*

"MY DEAR BROTHER, ROCHDALE, 16th Jan. 1827.

"IN reply to your's of the 11th inst. I would observe,—The extraordinary statement made by Mr. Harris, in the 'Christian Pioneer,' that the Socinian Congregations and Societies in Rochdale, Todmorden, Newchurch, &c. &c. consist of persons formerly in connexion with the Wesleyan Methodists, in the *sense in which he would be understood*, it is absolutely *untrue*. The fol-

lowing statement, as far as it respects *Rochdale*, will be found correct.

"From August 1803, to August 1805, the late Joseph Cooke was stationed as a Wesleyan Minister at Rochdale. Suspected, on sufficient grounds, of not being sound in the faith, he was tried at the Sheffield Conference, August 1805. I was present at the trial; and, I must say, a more fair, candid, and Christian examination, it was impossible to have witnessed. Joseph Cooke was rather an acute and subtle young man; but extremely pert and self-conceited. The fathers of the connexion took the lead in this examination. The Reverend Messrs. the *late* T. Coke, Jos. Benson, Jno. Pawson, Jno. Barber, W. Griffith, C. Atmore, &c. and the *present* penetrating A. Clarke, H. Moore, Jos. Sutcliffe, J. Edmondson, J. Entwistle, &c. were treated by this aspiring reformer, as so many novitiates in divinity. Yet, while a decision that would have done credit to St. Paul, marked the conduct of those profound theologians, it was blended with an affection that would not have disgraced St. John. I remember the discussion to this day; it left an indelible impression on my mind, and amazingly raised the character of the Preachers in my esteem, as men of astonishing Biblical knowledge, of great perspicuity in stating their views on divine truth, and as stewards of *Divine Mysteries* that needed not to be ashamed.

"The misguided young man, who treated the advice of near two hundred well-instructed Divines with extreme indifference, not to say contempt, in conclusion, made a promise to make the controverted topics a matter of close study for *one year;* but solemnly engaged before us all, not to agitate the points, directly or indirectly, in the pulpit, or in private, among our people. On this condition, we appointed him to the Sunderland circuit. He had not been many weeks in his new station before he violated his engagement with the Conference: he furiously preached, and soon after published his erroneous sentiments. At the Conference in 1806, we expelled him from the connexion. Rochdale having been his station the two preceding years, he came here August 1806; blew the trumpet of dissension; declared he was persecuted for preaching *primitive* Methodist doctrines; and that he was a real Methodist. Insinuating in his manners, pleasing in his address, and unwearied in his visits from house to house, he engaged many to leave our body. Very soon, however, the people began to see, what they at *first* little expected—the seeds of Socinianism, in their incipient stages, peep out; and many of them returned back immediately. In a very few years, Mr. Cooke died. His successor, not so cautious in concealing his antichristian creed, was the occasion of by far the greater part of those who left, returning to the Wesleyans.

"Since the death of Mr. Cooke, now more than 16 years ago, *not one member of the Wesleyan Society in Rochdale has joined the Socinians;* but *many* have *left the Socinians* and have joined the *Independents* and the *Wesleyans.*

"To evince the absolute falsity of Mr. Harris's assertion, I would further state, that the Rochdale Society, at the time of Mr. Cooke's

division, consisted of 850 members; now, besides giving 350 members, at the formation of the Bacup circuit, we have 1140 members, making a net increase of 620 members. At the time of Mr. Cooke's division, the Rochdale Chapel was comparatively small, and was not well filled; now we have one of the largest chapels in Methodism; as will appear if I place it before your mental eye. Then, look at an edifice 89 feet by 69—with a gallery all round, a gallery for simple elegance that I never saw equalled. It has 10 seats deep at the front; 13 deep at the front corners; 6 deep at each side; 4 deep behind the pulpit; and 8 deep behind the pulpit-corners—besides an aisle round the gallery. The Socinians, on the contrary, have the same obscure, small place they have had for years, and even that, I am told, is not near full.

"So much for the facts, that the Rochdale Methodists have become Socinians. The Cookites divided from us, under a conviction, no matter how ill soever founded, that our body was receding from primitive Methodism, and that Mr. C. was a real Methodist. Under the blighting and paralyzing ministry of this half Socinian teacher, a few deteriorated; but the mass, perceiving the subtle purpose of their new guides, wisely returned to the soul-reviving pastures of Wesleyan Methodism.

"In relation to Todmorden, the history is soon told. Socinianism has there scarcely 'a local habitation and a name.' I visited Todmorden a few weeks ago, to assist at the Wesleyan Mission Anniversary. Seeing a small new chapel on a neighbouring hill, I inquired to whom it belonged. The friends of whom I inquired, told me it was built for the Socinians, but that their minister, who had been doomed to preach to ten or a dozen persons, had lately left them, and that the chapel was then closed. The Wesleyan chapel, on the contrary, is so regularly overflowing with congregations, that the friends have entered into subscription to erect a larger one.

"Of the other places named in your letter, *I* know nothing; but make no doubt, were you to inquire of the preachers stationed at Bacup, for Newchurch and Rawtonstall, and of the Oldham preachers, Mr. Harris's statement would be found equally destitute of evidence; or rather directly opposed to the most clear, indisputable facts.

"Nor, Sir, is this a matter of surprise. When I look at Socinianism in its *genuine character*, and in its *moral tendency*, I feel strongly persuaded it never can make great progress, but must, as scriptural knowledge increases, recede into that darkness which gave it birth.

"It is the *genuine character* of *Socinianism* to *depreciate* the *Inspired Writings*. Without the least ceremony they reject certain portions of the Divine Word as unauthentic—place other parts as on a level with uninspired compositions—*now* maintain that the sacred writers reason inconclusively—*then* assert they write under the influence of Jewish prejudices. Can the unfettered minds of Wesleyans, who believe that 'all Scripture was given by inspiration of God,' believe this? Impossible; they are too well instructed in divine things.

"When I reflect too on the unwarrantable liberties the Socinians take with the *adorable* and *illustrious Saviour;* who is 'Over all, God, blessed for ever;' who is 'Immanuel, God with us;' who is 'Lord of all;' who is 'Jehovah our Righteousness,' &c. &c. and yet they bring him to the level of a *mere man;* our people are too well informed, unless fallen from grace, to drink in such deadly poison. I might speak of other doctrines.

"The *moral tendency* of Socinianism is equally unfavourable to attract the pious and useful members of the Wesleyan Society. Let Jesus Christ be preached in all his Divine Glory—in all his offices—in all his power to save from sin and death, and our chapels are crowded, whether in the Established Church or among Dissenters, whether among Arminians or Calvinists. But let the blighting doctrines of Socinianism be set forth, and, with all their meretricious ornament, with all the gawdy show with which they are usually exhibited, they generally fail to attract any considerable congregations.

"The *effects produced* on the *hearts* and *lives of professors*, is another thing that cannot escape the notice of Wesleyans. They cannot but inquire, Who have circulated Bibles, and religious tracts, and Christian education, and the knowledge of the Divine Redeemer through the globe? And here they are obliged to seek for such genuine philanthropists among those who are saved 'by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves;' to whom the preaching of 'Christ crucified,' has proved 'the power of God, and the wisdom of God,' in their salvation.

"Nay, Sir, should a Wesleyan occasionally look into the lives, spirit, and temper of *Socinian* and of *Orthodox divines*, he sees a striking difference between a Priestley and a Doddridge and a Wesley—a Belsham and a Fletcher—G. Harris and Jos. Sutcliffe.

"In the meantime, that a fallen Calvinist, and a backsliding Methodist, and fallen members of other pious denominations, should occasionally join the Socinians, is no matter of wonder. But I ask, When did one whose soul was alive to God, who was usefully employed in diffusing the truth as it is in Jesus, join the Socinians? When we look into Socinian congregations, we may find a few formerly belonging to *real Christian churches.* But inquire of their friends, 'Were they, prior to their leaving you, humble, meek, simple-hearted followers of the crucified Jesus?' *Generally*, it will be found the contrary—at least 30 years' observation (for it is 30 years since God brought me to himself), with many opportunities of forming an accurate estimate on this subject, compel me so to conclude. As I am prepared to abide by the various *facts* above stated, I leave you to make what use of this letter you please."—"Yours affectionately,

"BARNARD SLATER."

On this curious document, we would remark, that, as far as Rochdale is concerned, it confirms our statement; for Mr. Slater admits, that some persons who now compose part of the Unitarian Congregation at Rochdale, were

formerly Wesleyan Methodists. He contrasts the Unitarian place of worship with the Methodist chapel, "an edifice 89 feet by 69," &c. observing, "The Socinians, on the contrary, have the same obscure, small place they have had for years, and even that, I am told, is not near full." We do not charge Mr. Slater with concealing the truth; we do not say, that he meant to mislead the individual to whom his letter is addressed; but we do feel ourselves warranted, in calling on our readers not wholly to make up their judgments on the matter to which his letter refers. What will they think, when we inform them, that, in *addition* to the "obscure, small place" Mr. Slater mentions, Blackwater Chapel, which, we confess, is not in a very public situation, there is *another* Unitarian Chapel in Rochdale, standing in a very public place, which was built, and is supported by a portion of those Wesleyan Methodists, who, as we said in our Magazine for October, had become Christian Unitarians! We cannot give so full a description of its dimensions as Mr. Slater has done of the Methodist Chapel, but we know that it is neither "small" nor "obscure;" for *this* Unitarian Methodist Congregation have, for years, educated upwards of three hundred children in the Sunday schools belonging to their society. We hope that our excellent and esteemed friends, John Ashworth of Newchurch, and James Taylor of Rochdale, will enable us, in future numbers, to give an account of the rise and progress of the various Societies we have mentioned, that our readers may see how free inquiry leads men to burst the trammels in which, it is evident from Mr. Slater's own letter, Wesleyan Methodists are enthralled.

We cannot, however, allow even this Number to go forth, without earnestly praying our readers will not give in to that defamation of the character of the dead, in which Mr. Slater has indulged. The character of the late Joseph Cooke, will, we are satisfied, come forth as pure gold from the trial. It needs not our applause, for it is its own best commendation. If Mr. Slater's letter, however, be a faithful exhibition of the *spirit* and *temper* generated by Wesleyan Methodism, we can only say, as Archbishop Tillotson did of the Athanasian creed, we wish the Church of Christ well rid of it. If usurping the throne of God, and sitting in judgment on the characters, the motives, and the hearts of his fellow-creatures—if mis-statements of facts, and misrepresentations of doctrine—if holding forth the

hand of warning to "stand by, I am holier than thou," be the fruits manifested by one who boasts "*it is* 30 *years since God brought me to himself*," we must conclude, if we regard the authority of Scripture, that they are very different manifestations from what we should have expected from the spirit of a disciple of Jesus.

As to the comparison instituted between "the lives, spirit, and temper" of "a Priestley, and a Doddridge and a Wesley—a Belsham and a Fletcher," we fear not the strictest investigation. Those individuals will stand the test. But we must say, we abhor the bigotry which can see nothing to admire out of its own sect or party, and that it is one of the worst features of orthodoxy, that it cherishes this repulsive feeling towards individuals who are not within its pale. We rejoice that we can admire the indefatigable zeal of Wesley, and the piety of Doddridge; that we can perceive some of the brightest ornaments of human nature, in the churches of England and of Scotland; and can applaud the benevolence of many a member of the Romish communion. And even, as to Joseph Sutcliffe, though we know him not, still we doubt not he is a truly praiseworthy man. Of the individual with whom he is contrasted, we cannot, for obvious reasons, remark: but, in conclusion, we would, with the most friendly feeling, advise Mr. Slater, to evince the purity of his faith by the benevolence of his spirit; and to remember, that a practical exemplification of an obedience to the test, which our common Lord and Master gave of discipleship, is a much better evidence of being one of his faithful followers, than bringing railing accusations against another, or in bowing before the high behests of a Conference.

REVIEW.

Sermons on the Study of the Bible, and on the Doctrines of Christianity, as taught by our Lord Jesus Christ. By Dr. Bruce, of Belfast.

To this excellent volume of Sermons, we can only now briefly direct the attention of our readers. The following extract from the dedication to the Congregation of which the author is one of the ministers, breathes a most admirable spirit, and will, we think, be in itself an ample recommendation of the work.

"This volume I dedicate to you, in token of gratitude for the liberality and indulgence, with which you have attended on my ministry for four and thirty years; and in consequence of a wish, frequently expressed, that I should leave a record of the religious principles, inculcated from your pulpit for a century past.

"With this desire I have, at length been induced to comply, by the prevalence of opinions, which appear to me to be unscriptural, and of pernicious tendency; and an apprehension that yours may have been misrepresented by the violence of party zeal. I have, therefore, selected these discourses, not only to assist your recollection, but also for the consideration of those who differ from us. In these controversial times, individuals and societies are called upon to make their sentiments known; and a minister may deem it his duty to his people, to explain himself in a form more precise and permanent than oral instruction. This is particularly expedient in those who profess free inquiry, and adopt neither creed, nor confession, articles of faith, nor doctrinal catechism, but the Word of God alone.

"Though these circumstances may expose you to obloquy and misrepresentation, they are attended with many advantages. If your ministers can discover the truth, they have no temptation to conceal or pervert it; and you are equally free to adopt their sentiments, if they can convince you of their truth. They are not obliged to conform to an antiquated standard; neither do you expect them to flatter your prejudices. You choose them as instructors of all, and not as organs of the prejudices of the majority. Neither party is subject to any human control; and both have the free use of Scripture. We inherit no creed of human composition, and entail none on our posterity. We can all worship in spirit and from the heart, in truth and sincerity, and speak our sentiments without prevarication or reserve. We are neither fond of novelty, nor afraid of innovation; neither pledged to the support of established error, nor fearful of stumbling on some heretical truth. For my own part, I am more afraid of singularity, than ambitious of originality. I have always felt a dread of dealing out my own crude conceptions for your spiritual nourishment; and have preferred food, that had been well concocted by more skilful hands; diluted with "the pure milk of the Word," "and seasoned with salt." Having, however, freely exercised my privilege of selection, this volume is not composed on the plan of any prior system. It is consistent only with itself and the Gospel."

"The instructions of your teachers have, at all times, been combined with the principles of civil and religious liberty, and the rights of free inquiry and private judgment. Civil freedom is the parent and nurse of religious liberty, and is maintained and defended by her in return. Freedom of inquiry, and the privilege of private judgment, are the parents and guardians of Protestantism. Protestant establishments correct and restrain Papal influence and power; and Dissenters enlighten and check the Establishment. The philosophical Christian imbibes zeal from the enthusiast; and the fanatic is moderated by the rational believer. The sceptic becomes the voluntary cause of certainty;

and the infidel, an unconscious instrument in confirming and purifying faith. The austerity of a sect may retard the precipitancy of a dissolute age; the learning and liberality of the age may infuse a portion of good sense and good nature into the sect; and a bigoted partiality for ancient systems in one party, may counteract, and be counteracted by an inconsiderate love of novelty in another. All work together for good. In this chain you are an important link. In this spiritual warfare you occupy a strong post. Defend it with vigour and fidelity, neither dazzled with the glare of fashion, nor bribed by the mammon of unrighteousness; neither soured by bigotry, nor bewildered by fanaticism."

(To be Continued.)

Objections to Unitarian Christianity.

It is due to truth and a just deference to our fellow Christians, to take notice of objections which are currently made to our particular views of religion; nor ought we to dismiss such objections, as unworthy of attention on account of their supposed lightness, because, what is light to us, may weigh much with our neighbour; and truth may suffer from obstructions, which a few explanations might remove. It is to be feared that those Christians who are called Unitarian, have been wanting in this duty. Whilst they have met the laboured arguments of their opponents fully and fairly, they have overlooked the loose, vague, indefinite objections, which float through the community, and operate more on common minds than formal reasoning. On some of these objections, we shall make our remarks, and it is hoped that our plainness of speech will not be construed into severity, or our strictures on different systems be ascribed to a desire of retaliation. It cannot be expected that we shall repel with indifference, what seem to us reproaches on some of the most important and consoling views of Christianity. Believing that the truths, which, through God's good providence, we are called to maintain, are necessary to the vindication of the Divine character, and to the prevalence of a more enlightened and exalted piety, we are bound to assert them earnestly, and to speak freely of the opposite errors which now disfigure Christianity. We trust, however, that when it is remembered, with what language and feelings our views are assailed, we shall not be thought unwarrantably warm in their defence.

It is objected to us, that we deny the Divinity of Jesus

Christ. Now, what does this objection mean? What are we to understand by the Divinity of Christ? In the sense in which many Christians, and perhaps a majority, interpret it, we do not deny it, but believe it as firmly as themselves. We believe firmly in the Divinity of Christ's mission and office, that he spoke with Divine authority, and was a bright image of the Divine perfections. We believe that God dwelt in him, manifested himself through him, taught men by him, and communicated to him his spirit without measure. We believe that Jesus Christ was the most glorious display, expression, and representative of God to mankind, so that in seeing and knowing him, we see and know the Invisible Father; so that when Christ came, God visited the world, and dwelt with men more conspicuously than at any former period. In Christ's word, we hear God speaking—in his miracles, we behold God acting—in his character and life, we see an unsullied image of God's purity and love. We believe, then, in the Divinity of Christ, as this term is often and properly used.

How, then, it may be asked, do we differ from other Christians? We differ in this important respect. Whilst we honour Christ as the Son, representative, and image of the Supreme God, *we do not believe him to be the Supreme God himself.* We maintain that Christ and God are *distinct* beings; *two* beings, not one and the same being. On this point, a little repetition may be pardoned, for many good Christians, after the controversies of ages, misunderstand the *precise difference* between us and themselves. Trinitarianism teaches, that Jesus Christ is the Supreme and Infinite God, and that he and his Father are not only one in affection, counsel, and will, but are strictly and literally one and the same being. Now, to us, this doctrine is most irrational and unscriptural. We say, that the Son cannot be the same being with his own Father; that he who was sent into the world to save it, cannot be the living God who sent him. The language of Jesus is explicit and unqualified;—"I came not to do mine own will." "I came not from myself." "I came from God." Now, we affirm, and this is our chief heresy, that Jesus was not, and could not be, that God from whom he came; but was another being, and it amazes us that any can resist this simple truth. The doctrine, that Jesus who was born, who ate and drank and slept, who suffered and was crucified, who came from God, who prayed to God,

who did God's will, and who said, on leaving the world, "I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God;" the doctrine, that this Jesus was the Supreme God himself, and the same being with his Father—this seems to us a contradiction to reason and scripture, so flagrant, that the simple statement of it is a sufficient refutation. We are often charged with degrading Christ, but if this reproach belong to any Christians, it falls, we fear, on those who accuse him of teaching a doctrine so contradictory, and so subversive of the supremacy of our Heavenly Father. Certainly, our humble and devout Master, has given no ground for this accusation. He always expressed towards God, the reverence of a son. He habitually distinguished himself from God. He referred to God all his powers. He said without limitation or reserve, "My Father is greater than I."—"Of myself I can do nothing." If to represent Christ as a being distinct from God, and as inferior to him, be to *degrade* him, then let our opponents lay the guilt where it belongs, not on *us*, but on our Master, whose language we borrow, in whose very words we express our sentiments, whose words we dare not trifle with, and force from their plain and evident sense. We ask, then, of common Christians, those who have taken their opinions from the Bible rather than from human systems, to look honestly into their own minds, and to answer frankly, whether they have not understood and believed Christ's Divinity, in the sense maintained by us, rather than in that for which Trinitarians contend?

(To be Continued.)

Of the Three Heavenly Witnesses, and of Baptism in the name of the Trinity.

We sincerely give our full acquiescence to the doctrine, that no man can be a sincere religionist, who does not respect the Scripture given by divine inspiration. We do not, however, admit, that *all* the books of the Old and New Testament, or that *every part of some* of those books, *are* given by divine inspiration. On the contrary, we believe that many interpolations were made, and forgeries introduced into various versions of the New Testament, from the first to the fifteenth century of the Christian era. Besides these interpolations and forgeries, there are several

instances of mistranslation in our *authorised* English version, made, we have no doubt, to support the doctrine of the Godhead of Jesus Christ. The principal of these is, 1 John v. 7. "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." This is now almost universally admitted to be a forgery. Dr. Adam Clarke, in his commentary on this text, says, "Though a conscientious believer in the doctrine of the ever-blessed, holy, and undivided Trinity, and in the proper and essential Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, I cannot help doubting the authenticity of the text." He discusses the question with very great ability, and displays a depth of research as a biblical scholar, infinitely to his credit. But the *argument* which struck us most forcibly, was an extract from Dr. Dodd.

"It is worthy of remark," says Dr. Clarke, "that Luther never admitted the text of the three witnesses into any of the editions of his translation.—On this, Professor *Michaelis* makes the following observation; 'It is uncandid in the extreme, for one Protestant to condemn another for rejecting 1 John v. 7, since it was rejected by the author of our Reformation.' Again, Professor *Griesbach, who does not appear to be an enemy to the doctrine*, and who has carefully and critically examined all the evidences and arguments, *pro* and *con*, has given up the text as utterly defenceless, and thinks that to plead for its authenticity is dangerous. 'For if,' says he, 'a few dubious, suspicious, and modern evidences, with such weak arguments as are usually adduced, are sufficient to demonstrate the authenticity of a *reading*, then there remains no longer any criterion by which the spurious may be distinguished from the genuine; and, consequently, the whole New Testament is unascertained and dubious.'" Dr. Clarke then proceeds to discuss the arguments and authorities adduced in support of this disputed text, and concludes thus;—"To make the whole more clear, that every reader may see what has been *added*, I shall set down these verses with the inserted words in brackets.

"6 'And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. 7 For there are three that bear record [in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. 8 And there are three that bear witness in earth], the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. 9 If we receive the witness

of men, the witness of God is greater', &c. Any man," continues the learned Doctor, "may see, on examining the words, that if those included in brackets, which are wanting in the MSS. and *versions*, be omitted, there is no want of *connection;* and as to the sense, it is complete and perfect without them." He then adds the opinion of Dr. Dodd, to which we have alluded:—"There are some internal and accidental remarks, which may render the passage suspected, for the sense is complete, and the sense more clear and better preserved without it. Besides, the Spirit is mentioned both as a witness in heaven and on earth; so that the *six* witnesses are thereby reduced to *five*, and the equality in number or antithesis between the witnesses in heaven and on earth, is quite taken away: besides, what need of witnesses *in heaven?* No one there doubts that Jesus is the Messiah; and if it be said, that Father, Son, and Spirit are witnesses on earth, then there are *five* witnesses on earth, and none in heaven: not to say, that there is a little difficulty in interpreting how the Word or the Son can be a witness to himself." The text then should be simply read thus, "There are three that bear record, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one,"—which makes the sense *consistent* with all other Scripture.

This reasoning of Dr. Dodd is not only conclusive on the point, but it appears to us to warrant (if it could require the aid of human authority to warrant) the use of our reasoning faculties in the interpretation of Scripture. Now, there is another text which we consider a forgery. It is Mat. xxviii. 19. In pursuance of Dr. Clarke's plan, we quote the whole sentence, placing the words we consider apocryphal in brackets. "18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them [in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost]; 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, unto the end of the world." We omit the word *even*, as being an acknowledged interpolation of the translator.

Now, according to Dr. Clarke's and Dr. Dodd's tests of correctness, the *sense* is complete without the words included in brackets, and there is no want of connection if they be omitted. In *no other* place in all the Old and

New Testament, is there a direction to baptize in the name of the Father or the Holy Ghost, nor any allusion to baptism in his name, unless John the Baptist's ceremony can be considered so.

Jesus Christ, indeed, told his Disciples (Acts i. 5), "John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost," and we find the promise literally fulfilled. We also find frequent reference to baptism, but never to baptism in the name of *the Father*. In Rom. vi. 3, St. Paul asks, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" that is, into the belief of his doctrines, as their truth was attested by his death. In 1 Cor. i. 13, the same writer asks, "Is Christ divided? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" obviously drawing the inference, that they were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, and in his name only. In the same Epistle, x. 1, 2, St. Paul says, "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." This latter text has given a handle which has been unsparingly used, in opposition to the doctrine of Trinity; but as it does not immediately apply here, we shall advert to it under another and more appropriate head.

Now, we admit our strict disbelief that ever Jesus Christ gave any such directions as to the *mode of baptism* contained in the words which we have inclosed in brackets [in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost], and our firm conviction, that it is one of those "pious frauds" which were resorted to in the early ages of the church, for the purpose of bolstering up the Heathen doctrine of a plurality of persons in the Godhead.

In addition to these reasons for expunging the expression from, and for rejecting it as "Scripture given by inspiration of God," we think, and believe, that if Jesus Christ had given such an express direction to the Apostles, they would have obeyed it; of which we not only do not find evidence that they did, but we do find distinct evidence that *they did not*. On these grounds, we do confidently reject the words in question as portions of Holy Writ. Thus, we submit, that the omission of these words, gives to the passage, what we consider the surest test of authenticity, namely, consistency with all other Scripture;

and also takes away the charge from the Apostles, of not obeying the express directions of their Lord and Master. It should then stand thus, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them, teaching them to observe all things," &c. which is a direction that was implicitly obeyed by his Apostles, to whom it was given.

We are aware, that if an expression be once admitted to be of divine inspiration, it is no argument to show that it has not been repeated in other places of Scripture. We do not rest our reading of the text in question, upon the mere circumstance of there being no other place in Scripture where the names of the three persons in the Trinity are expressly given connectedly together; but we do rest our belief of our correctness, on the absurdity which must follow its being retained,—that it never was acted upon by the Apostles, who *must have been aware of it*, if it had really been spoken by Jesus Christ.

Ballymena, Feb. 1827. N. B.

THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

Glasgow, *March* 1, 1827.

We have, this month, the painful duty of announcing to our readers, the death of the Rev. John Evans, LL. D. This event took place on the 25th January, in the 60th year of his age. We recur with a feeling of melancholy satisfaction, to the communication with which he favoured our Magazine, No. 5, page 161; and we have pleasure in recollecting, that our efforts to uphold the great doctrines of the Reformation, met with his approbation. We had indulged the expectation, agreeably to his own expressed intentions, that we should occasionally have received further communications from him; but it has pleased that Providence, whose measures are all founded in wisdom, to disappoint our hopes, and to call our friend to himself. Dr. Evans's was a useful, active, and, we believe, happy life. He had been assiduously engaged in the instruction of youth nearly thirty years, and published several works highly calculated for the improvement and rational pleasure of the rising generation. But this, his "favourite pursuit," he never "suffered to interfere with the duties of the minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ." For five and

thirty years, he filled the office of Pastor to the General Baptist Congregation, Worship-Street, London, and was ever ready to assist his brethren in the ministry, in other occasional services, to diffuse Christian truth and charity. Even after he was deprived, by a lingering disease, of the use of the lower parts of his body, still he desisted not from his ministerial labours. His sons carried him into the house of prayer, and those who heard the fervency of his exhortations against intolerance, and in favour of Gospel benevolence, would never have imagined that he was not in complete possession of all the powers of his frame. Though the body gradually wasted, the intellectual fire still burned brightly; and to the closing hour of his mortal pilgrimage, Dr. Evans exhibited a cheering example of the efficacy of a pure and benevolent faith, in overcoming the ills to which flesh is heir, and of enabling its possessor to view with calm serenity and devout resignation, the dispensations of the God of love. Dr. Evans and his family had a severe loss, a few years since, in the death of a beloved son, destined to the ministry, and who had given promise of excellence and usefulness. "The loss of relatives and friends," as Dr. Evans observes, "comes over us like a dense cloud, flinging a deep and lengthened shadow over terrestrial enjoyments. It is a moral earthquake, agitating the soul to its centre, but through a Divine blessing, rendering it susceptible of the best impressions. Under these heart-rending dispensations, we quit our hold of the things of time and sense, and meditate on the everduring bliss of eternity. We welcome the tidings of immortality." Dr. Evans was well prepared for death, for it had long been the subject of his frequent meditations and pulpit teachings. In his dedication of his "Tracts, Sermons, &c." he remarks to the friend to whom it is addressed, dated July 8, 1825, "We have been long and felicitously connected. Our day is drawing to a close. Soon we shall be laid not far apart, in the silent tomb. But death is only a temporary separation. We part, to meet again in a region whence 'painful farewells' are excluded. The delicious fruits of Revealed Religion, ripe and matured, 'thick clustering on the tree of life,' we hope to gather in a better world, uncontaminated by the ravages of the last foe."

The Sketch of the Denominations of the Christian World, was Dr. Evans's most celebrated work. The

fifteenth edition, we believe, is lately announced. It is a publication, we think, richly meriting perusal, and one which has been productive of extensive good, in softening down the asperities of contending parties. Its "Sequel," too, cannot be read, we think, without loosening the hold which bigotry has over the minds of too many religious professors. Dr. Evans's great aim, indeed, was to show mankind that "the end of the commandment, is charity out of a pure heart," and in that object, he was, we trust, eminently successful. Dr. Evans published, also, a letter to Dr. Hawker on General Redemption. This publication was happily, by the blessing of God, "the means of rescuing an individual from self-destruction, whose mind had been harassed by the doctrines of Election and Reprobation." This is an important fact, strikingly illustrative of the superior moral and benevolent effects of Christian Unitarianism, compared with reputed Orthodoxy. It "is matter of fact relating to error itself, not to the persons who maintain it, therefore its mention is no breach of candour or charity. Spare the heretic, but not the heresy. Had an attention been paid to this dictate of genuine Christianity, the dungeons of the Inquisition would never have been excavated, nor the fires of martyrdom blazed in Smithfield," nor certain clauses of the Athanasian Creed had existence, nor intolerance disfigured the deeds of professed Christian and Protestant churches.

Whilst thus bearing our testimony to the Christian excellence of one of our Instructors, we cannot forbear also recording our grateful recollections of another of our revered Teachers, George Jardine, Esq. Professor of Logic in the University of Glasgow. Full of years and honours, this venerable man departed this life on the 23d January, aged 85. It is a Scripture declaration, "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man;" and we know no one, to whom those who have enjoyed the benefit of his instructions, have more gladly paid these marks of deference and respect. For ourselves, we remember with pleasure, the improvement we derived from the teachings of "that old man eloquent," and we are confident, that no one who marked his faithful discharge of the duties of his important station, the kindness which distinguished his behaviour to his students, the deep interest he evinced in their improvement, and the benevolent joy which beamed on his countenance, at the

efforts of opening intellect, can dwell upon his memory, without feelings of gratitude and veneration. We cannot form a better wish for his successor, than that the mantle of Elijah may fall upon Elisha.

In addition to these respected individuals, we have also to notice the decease, on the 10th January, of Dr. JOHN JONES. His laborious and valuable life has also come to a close, but his labours still survive. His interesting and original works on Theology, his Greek Lexicon, and his defence of Christianity in reply to that curious work—"Not Paul, but Jesus"—will cause him long to be remembered, and be productive of good to his fellow-creatures, whilst he is gone to his reward.

We cannot close our remarks on these distinguished individuals, more appropriately, we think, than with the following lines by that ornament of her sex and of Christian Unitarianism, Mrs. Barbauld:

When life as opening buds, is sweet,
And golden hopes the fancy greet,
And Youth prepares his joys to meet,—
Alas! how hard it is to die!

When just is seized some valued prize,
And duties press, and tender ties
Forbid the soul from earth to rise,—
How awful then it is to die!

When, one by one, those ties are torn,
And friend from friend is snatched forlorn,
And man is left alone to mourn,—
Ah then, how easy 'tis to die!

When faith is firm, and conscience clear,
And words of peace the spirit cheer,
And visioned glories half appear,—
'Tis joy, 'tis triumph then to die.

When trembling limbs refuse their weight,
And films, slow gathering, dim the sight,
And clouds obscure the mental light,—
'Tis nature's precious boon to die.

WE have sincere pleasure in saying, the attendance on the Sabbath-day Unitarian worship at Carluke, has been so steadily increasing, that the Congregation there, have opened a subscription to erect a Chapel. A considerable sum has already been raised, and we trust that in our next Number, we shall be able to announce the time when the foundation-stone will be laid. We shall be happy to receive Donations, towards the accomplishment of this desirable and important object.

THE

CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

No. 8. APRIL, 1827. Vol. I.

Unitarian Worthies.—No. 1, *Thomas Firmin.*

"Pure Charity, that comes not like a shower,
Sudden and loud, oppressing what it feeds;
But like the dew, with soft refreshing power,
Felt in the bloom it leaves along the meads."

THOMAS FIRMIN was born at Ipswich in Suffolk, in the year 1632. His parents owed the respectability which they enjoyed, not so much to their worldly substance as to the right and full discharge of the duties of their station. They belonged to the class of Christians whom our ancestors designated Puritans, by way of opprobrium, as Unitarians are now termed Socinians, by every bigot. Under their influence, Thomas was educated in Calvinistic principles. Upon these, however, our good Puritan forefathers did not lay so much stress, as upon the right of free inquiry and individual judgment; and the parents of Thomas Firmin, whilst they inculcated these primary principles upon the mind of their son, took especial care of the formation of his heart to piety and goodness. Never was there presented a more illustrious instance of the beneficial effects of a religious education. His parents apprenticed our "worthy" to a tradesman in London, who was accustomed to attend the ministry of the celebrated Mr. John Goodwin. Mr. Goodwin was an Arminian. And now began to appear the good effects of a liberal education. Mr. Firmin's attention was drawn to his Calvinistic opinions, by the elegant and learned sermons of his minister. He contrasted the arguments adduced in favour both of Calvinism and Arminianism, and, in spite of the prejudices of education, he was led, to use the words of his friend and first biographer, "to exchange the harsh opinions of Calvin for those, more honourable to God, and more accountable to human reason, of Arminius and the Remonstrants." His piety evinced itself, not only in thus far purifying his creed, but also, in well digesting and applying to himself the discourses of Mr. Goodwin. By the assistance of short-hand, he was enabled to carry away

whatever was uttered in the pulpit. "Of this," says his biographer, "he made a double use, both then and in the very busiest part of his life; for, if the sermon was considerable for judicious morality or weighty arguments, he often read it, in his short-hand notes, for his own further improvement, and then took the pains to write it out in words at length, for the benefit of his acquaintance."

After having passed through an apprenticeship, in which he had demeaned himself with unusual amiableness and integrity, and also, with so much activity that he was called "the spirit," he entered upon business on his own account, with the slender capital of £100. But the habits which he had formed whilst a servant, soon procured for him an extensive and profitable business; and he quickly overcame the difficulties of a commencement with so small a sum, so that, in the year 1660, he was enabled to marry a citizen's daughter with a portion of £500.

A short time after his marriage, he became acquainted with Mr. Biddle. In consequence of his intimacy with this excellent and persecuted man, he was confirmed in his Arminian opinions, and led to the adoption of the distinguishing feature of Unitarianism, the unrivalled supremacy and strict unity of God. Of Mr. Biddle's piety, exemplariness, and learning, he entertained a great and just esteem. His hospitality towards him was kind and unbounded. And when Mr. Biddle had been sent prisoner to the Isle of Scilly by the Protector, he used his influence both with Cromwell and his friends, to procure him the means of subsistence.

We may mention, as illustrative of the character of Mr. Firmin, that he was devoted to the pleasures of gardening. This, we might have expected, in one whose heart was so sensitive and pure, and whose mind so fondly conversed with the word of God. Between the works and the word of the Divine Being, subsists the most intimate connection; and the man who studies the one, will find delight in conversing with the other. And his biographer informs us of a fact, which is also beautifully in unison with the foregoing. Either as he went, or as he returned, he was wont to visit the poor and the sick; he chose well his time for these deeds of mercy, for his soul would then most harmonize with the spirit of his Maker, when fresh from the contemplation of his wondrous doings. This practice of visiting the poor we much admire; and earnestly

wish, that those who give would always see also to whom they give. "This," says his biographer, "was one of Mr. Biddle's lessons, that it is a duty not only to relieve, but to visit the sick and poor, because they are thereby encouraged and comforted, and we come to know of what nature and degree their straits are; and their condition being known, we are able to assist them, by our counsel or our interest, much more effectually than by the charity we can bestow upon them." At the present period, though his means were not affluent, and the claims upon them from charitable objects numerous and weighty, yet he was most beneficent to a great number of persons who stood more or less nearly related to him. And as his property increased, so did his heart expand. He now became universally known and respected, for deeds of splendid charity. Nor less ought it to be spoken to his praise, that his charity was never indiscriminate. It is to be deeply regretted, that both private and public charity in these days, has a tendency to increase the evil which it strives to diminish; and this it does, by providing funds and institutions, upon assistance from which the improvident and the idle may securely reckon. It will be seen how much more judicious was the conduct of Mr. Firmin in this important matter.

In the year 1665, happened the great plague, of which there died, in that one year, and in London only, nearly 100,000 persons. On this occasion, Mr. Firmin's benevolence was not supine. Weekly relief was administered to the poor, and especially he found *employment* for vast numbers. This was done at a very great risk: he afterwards found, however, a merchant, who was so pleased with his adventurous charity, that he purchased the chief part of the goods so manufactured, and indemnified Mr. Firmin.

The year after the sickness, came the great fire, by which the city of London sustained a damage of ten millions sterling. Mr. Firmin suffered equally with his neighbours. But now, his noble spirit and generous manner of trading were so well known, that he soon repaired his losses, and again began to consider the poor. His first service to them was the erection of a warehouse, by the waterside, in which he might store up corn and coals. These he sold out to the poor, in times of scarcity, at the prices at which he had purchased them. He then pro-

ceeded to erect a warehouse, in order to employ those who were destitute of occupation in the linen manufacture. "He bought," says Archbishop Tillotson, "flax and hemp for them to spin; when spun, he paid them for their work, and caused it to be wrought into cloth, which he sold as he could, himself bearing the loss." "By this excellent device," says the good Archbishop, "many hundreds of poor children, and others who lived idle before, unprofitable both to themselves and the public, now maintain themselves, and are also some advantage to the community. By the assistance and charity of many excellent and well-disposed persons, Mr. Firmin is enabled to bear the unavoidable loss and charge of so vast an undertaking; and, by his own forward inclination to charity, and unwearied diligence and activity, is fitted to sustain and go through the incredible pains of it." Concerning this institution, Mr. Firmin would often say,—"To pay the spinners—to relieve them, with money begged for them, with coals and shirting—was to him such a pleasure as magnificent buildings, pleasant walks, well cultivated orchards and gardens, the jollity of music and wine, or the charms of study were to others."

Mr. Firmin was one of the governors of St. Thomas's Hospital in Southwark, and extremely active in his endeavours to render it as beneficial as possible; and, during the last twenty years of his life, he was also a governor of Christ Church Hospital in London, of which he proved himself a great benefactor, not only by his donations, but also by his constant supervision.

(To be Continued.)

The Autumn Evening.

(From "The Poetical Catechism," America.)

Behold the western evening light!
It melts in deepening gloom!
So, calmly, Christians sink away,
Descending to the tomb.

The winds breathe low, the withering leaf
Scarce whispers from the tree!
So, gently, flows the parting breath
When good men cease to be.

How beautiful on all the hills,
The crimson light is shed!
'Tis like the peace the Christian gives
To mourners round his bed.

How mildly on the wandering cloud
The sunset beam is cast!
'Tis like the memory left behind
When loved ones breathe their last.

And now, above the dews of night
The yellow star appears;
So faith springs in the heart of those,
Whose eyes are bathed in tears.

But soon the morning's happier light
Its glory shall restore;
And eye-lids that are seal'd in death,
Shall wake, to close no more.

On Unitarians attending Trinitarian Worship.

(Concluded from page 257.)

The consistent and devout Unitarian regards the doctrine of the Divine Unity of great consequence. He esteems it of no small importance, that the glory which is due to the Father only, should not be given to another. His mind revolts from joining in a religious service, in which the Creator is deprived of his right, robbed of his glory, and spoiled of his supremacy. He is jealous for the honours, glories, and attributes of his heavenly Father, and will by no means, join in religious communion with Christians who give him a divided homage and a divided heart, and who raise others to be the partners of his throne. His pious feelings are wounded, when he thinks of the prevalence of Christian idolatry, when he considers that the attributes of benevolence and mercy are ascribed to Christ, and that the Father is worshipped as a stern, inexorable tyrant, "by whose decree, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others fore-ordained to everlasting death." The Unitarian rejoices in the conviction, that God is his Father, the Father of mercies, who, of his abundant mercy, has begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; but the Trinitarian regards the Father as a vindictive Being,

and represents the Son as the compassionate God, who offered up himself as a sacrifice, to "satisfy the justice of the Father, to purchase reconciliation, and to become our surety," or rather, the surety of the elect, "for the rest of mankind, God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice."* The Unitarian who attends the Church of Scotland, is not only guilty of bowing down before false gods, but of worshipping the Father despoiled of all the attributes which entitle him to the veneration, the gratitude, and love of his rational offspring. It is, to me, surprising, that Unitarians can resist the force of such momentous considerations. Surely, they cannot have considered the object of the Mosaic dispensation, the denunciations against idolatry, and the design of the mission of Christ. Does a Unitarian joining in Trinitarian worship, worship the Father in spirit and in truth? does he worship him in the beauty of holiness?

This outward conformity to idolatrous worship seems to be not only a violation of the first commandment, but also to involve an infraction of the second, which is like unto it, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." This injunction requires, that we should not lead him into sin, by setting a bad example. But the conforming Unitarian, especially if he is a man of some standing in society, will very likely lead others of the same religious faith, to violate the dictates of their consciences. Powerful is the influence of example. The majority of mankind regulate their conduct by the prescriptions of fashion.

The consistent Unitarian will endeavour, with all humility, to let his light so shine before men, that they may be led to glorify his Father in heaven. Believing that he has come to a knowledge of religious truth, and having a deep sense of the great importance of pure religion to the present and eternal interests of man, he will endeavour to make known his principles. Rejoicing himself in the truth, he is not so selfish as to confine his cheering and purifying principles to his own breast. He believes them to be doctrines according to godliness, and well calculated to support the mind under the heavy pressure of affliction. As Jesus came to bear witness to the truth, and laid down

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* Confession of Faith.

his life in behalf of it, he will not allow worldly considerations to deter him from the open and fearless avowal of his sentiments, which he believes are those which Christ and his Apostles communicated. Neither the fear of man, the dread of singularity, the clamours of bigotry, the reproaches of friends, the misrepresentations of neighbours, nor the love of ease, of quiet, nor a regard to property, will lead him to a Church the doctrines of which he disbelieves; but he will come out of it, and bear his testimony to the doctrines which he has seriously adopted, from an examination of the Word of Divine Truth.

Public worship is an act, and an important means of piety. It is sweet and pleasant to go to the house of God in company; but it is still sweeter and pleasanter to obey the dictates of the conscience, and worship the Father in spirit and in truth. Withdrawing, from conscientious scruples, from Trinitarian worship, the Unitarian may have worship in his own family; and some of his neighbours may join in adorations addressed to the one only living and true God. When two or three are gathered together for this important object, they may derive much religious edification, and they will also manifest to the world, that their absence from church does not proceed from indifference to religion, but from a sacred regard to the pious dictates of their own consciences. Thus, they will obviate the bad effects which would result to themselves from withdrawing from public worship, and to others from the influence of their example, and will form a nucleus round which other free and impartial inquirers will gather. Thus, a regular religious society may be established, and, by zeal tempered with knowledge, a flourishing congregation be raised. The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took and sowed in his field; which indeed is the least of all seeds, but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

A Unitarian Christian.

The Influence of External Objects upon the Moral Character and Feelings.

The mind of man is, perhaps, never seen to greater advantage, than when viewed in the act of carrying on a

patient and candid investigation into the nature, frame, and constitution of its own being—analysing its several powers and capacities—discriminating its distinctive faculties—and pursuing the examination of its various and wonderful phenomena, to that point (be it where it may) to which experience and observation may direct it. It is from a survey such as this, that the mind returns ennobled and enlarged. And, exulting in the consciousness of an inherent dignity—and casting from it, the corrosive cares and jarring interests of a transitory existence,—the spirit breaks free from the restraints of an earth-born inclination—soars beyond the influence of a material organization, and holds communion with the Author of its being, in the breathings of a fervent and spiritual devotion. It is from such a survey, that the spark of Deity within becomes re-kindled in the breast, and throws across the path of its earthly pilgrimage, a steady and enduring lustre, which lights the child of mortality with a sure and unerring guidance, to the haven of his final destination.

From such an investigation, we learn that sensation forms one of the primary faculties of the human mind. Let us direct our attention to the phenomena presented to us, in the influence exercised by external objects upon the moral character and feelings; and for this purpose, contrast the savage with the civilized state of man,—the dusky warrior of the west, with the pallid artizan and livid dependent upon the charities of a manufacturing district.

Behold the savage!—not as he is to be seen now, a mere wreck of former greatness—enslaved by the vices, and contaminated by the touch of a foreign and *civilized* people,—but behold him, when he ranged the forest-paths, the free and undisputed monarch of the wild! Behold him, when he trod the wilderness, the simple, unsophisticated child of nature!

What was it, that instilled into his uninformed mind, that stern grandeur of feeling—that wild sublimity of conception—that lofty endurance of suffering,—which prepared him for noble undertakings—which supported him through the trials of their execution, and prevented him from sinking into an effortless despondency, upon the failure of his fondest hopes—the destruction of long-cherished speculations? It was the habitual converse, the uninterrupted intercourse which he held, from the first dawn of infancy to the latest throb of life, with all that is grand,

and sublime, and elevating, in the material universe. That grandeur of feeling, had its rise, growth, and maturity, from the soul-awakening contemplation of the far descending cataract, which, shooting from a mountain's marble brow, falls, flaked with foam, embossed with bubbling froth, with hoarse-tongued thundering din, to abysses—fathomless and void. That sublimity of conception, dawned upon the opening mind, when the first impression was received of night's "proud heraldry"—the "burning blazonry of God!" That patient endurance of fatigue and deprivation—from the necessities and trials so intimately and inseparably connected, with the migrations of an uncivilized and uncultivated people.

What is it that nerves the savage warrior, to bear, amidst the fiendish exultations and brutal triumph of his foes, the most revolting barbarities—the acutest suffering—the most agonizing pains,—and not betray the torture of the soul—the throes of exhausted nature—by an involuntary groan;—no! nor the slightest convulsion of a nerve?—which enables him to raise the war-song of his tribe, with an unpalsied lip, and an unquivering tone? It is the bright and animating hope, of meeting with a better state beyond the grave; where pastures will be fresher, and rivers brighter—and game more abounding, and where the white man will not come! Whence springs this expectation, so powerful—so enduring? Whence gathered this untutored savage, his hopes of an hereafter? It was from observing the phenomena of nature—from reflecting upon the revolutions of the very forest, under whose high arcades and thick embowering shade he erects his lowly cabin. He observes, that, if the icy breath of winter comes as a blast from the desert, and lays their green heads low, yet the spring returns with its showers, and the mantle of verdure is spread. Yes, it is from perusing the varied page of nature, that he is taught to direct his views beyond the dark curtain of the tomb; and to sustain, with unyielding fortitude, all that malice can inflict.

Now, let us change the picture, and view the pale and sickly habitants of a closely-piled and thickly crowded city,—shut out from the painted meads, the broomy knolls and clear blue streams, and excluded from the freshening breeze of heaven and the cheery glances of the sun.

See! the pallid train of sufferers issuing, wan and haggard, from the close confinement of some living sepulchre,

which swallows up the victims offered to the Moloch of an inordinate lust of gain—in whose thick and stagnant atmosphere, pestilence and desolation, sit and brood, till, thick encrusted with disease and death, they spread their fatal wings—rustle their poisoned plumes—and, taking their baneful flight, settle over the death-devoted city—then flap their heavy pinions, full charged with death, and shower down to earth, destruction, plague, and woe! Oh! once more gaze upon that exhausted crew!—disheartened, wearied, spiritless, they return to the bosom of their homes, from the dirt and loathsomeness of the manufactory, worn out with the labour and hardship of the day; but, no fond smile there meets the wearied man, to welcome back the guardian of the social hearth—no childish lispings break upon the ear, and drive away the harpies of despair,—that home is the miserable purlieus of a workhouse—that greeting is the intoxicated laugh of the debauchee!

Whence, then, are to spring the defenders of a country's rights? Can the glad beam of liberty find access to such a care-worn breast, and charm away the ravening tooth of famine? Can that tortured frame possess a mind, with strength to dare, and power to resolve?

The mind turns in upon itself, and feeds upon its own sorrow; despondency usurps the place of the elasticity of youth; till, wrapped in the gloomy void of Atheism, the victim to sordid gain and illicit pleasure, breaks through all the restraints of virtue—forsakes the paths into which his feet were guided, in the unstained period of his boyhood, and unites himself with the degenerate beings, whose whole existence is a practical commentary on the words, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

Unitarian Controversy in Alnwick.

We introduced to the notice of our readers, No. 5, page 188, the advertisement by the Rev. W. Procter, and the excellent answer of Mr. Wright. Mr. Procter seems determined to maintain his "blushing honours," and to do all in his power to bring ridicule and disgrace on the cause he pleads, and the University which educated him. The following extracts will show his lamentable spirit.

"*To the 'Children, Apprentices, and Servants' who have, unhappily for themselves, been tempted and permitted to frequent 'the frantic revels of spiritual intoxication and adultery,' which are again permitted, in God's displeasure, to disgrace and corrupt the Town of Alnwick.*"

"Suppose a preacher of *Atheism* were to appear among us, and to put out weekly Hand-bills, undertaking to prove that *there is no God, no future state, no difference between right and wrong:* suppose him to exhibit in plausible form all the deceitful arguments he could collect against the existence of God,—arguments not the less likely to mislead those who heard them then for the first time, because they had been confuted a thousand times before: suppose him to back those arguments by bold assertions of things most remote from truth; and to throw in a plentiful seasoning of ridicule and mimicry to render his performances attractive, and of intrepid blasphemy to render them imposing: would you, my friends, think it quite safe to attend such Lectures? Would you think it quite consistent with your duty to God to laugh at *such ridicule*, or to listen with patience to *such blasphemy?* If, from idle curiosity or love of amusement, you were tempted to resort to such ungodly Meetings, can you now, before that particular temptation is upon you, say it would be right in your Parents, Masters, or Mistresses to permit you to do so? Can you say, it would be wrong in any Minister of God to remind them that it was their duty to prevent you? I think not. Yet if such advice were given, what would be the language of the Preacher of Atheism? He would exclaim against it as an attempt 'to impose restraints upon the free exercise of the mind in matters of religion—to check the spirit of free inquiry'—and so forth, just as Mr. Wright has done for more than a page together. And with just as good reason; for I do maintain, and as long as I can read the Bible must believe, that to blaspheme and deny God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, is as great a sin, as to blaspheme and deny God the Father."

"Mr. Wright's attempt to excite a spirit of insubordination in 'school boys,' apprentices, and servants, is perhaps more directly mischievous; but it is not more insulting to your understandings than his attempt to shake your confidence in the Ministers of the Church, by imputing to them mercenary motives. You well know that the incomes of the Established Clergy do not at all depend upon the numbers that compose their congregations. A full Church never makes them a farthing richer, nor a thin one a farthing poorer. Mr. Wright's profits, on the contrary, depend altogether upon a full house; and all his exertions to fill the house—his buffoonery, his placards, his play-bills, are utterly incompatible with any but a worldly spirit. He openly makes merchandise of you, which is one strong circumstance, among the many that prove him to be of the number of those denounced by St. Peter, 2d Epis. chap. ii.—Read on I entreat you to the end of the Chapter, and if after that, you dare resort to these unholy meetings—these 'frantic revels of spiritual intoxication and adultery,' to

what can such perverseness be imputed, but to the 'deceivableness of unrighteousness,' that 'strong delusion' spoken of by St. Paul, 2 Thes. ii. 10, 11, 12."

Mr. Wright's "Query, 'how could Christ have a God and Father, if he was himself Almighty God?' Which Query may be answered by another, how can Man have a Soul, if he is himself 'a living Soul?' (see Gen. ii. 7.)"

"Mr. Wright has very correctly translated my word 'orgies' into 'frantic revels;' and that no one may mistake what I mean by 'spiritual adultery,' I will here repeat what I have said in my Defence of the Orthodox Faith, that I consider Anti-Trinitarians to be Idolaters, in as much as they worship a God different from the true God, who 'was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.' (2 Cor. v. 19.) Bearing this in mind, whoever will be at the pains to turn to Leviticus xviii. 7, Judges ii. 17, Psalm cvi. 39, Ezekiel xvi. throughout; and Revelation xvii. 1 and 16, and xix. 2, will find ample warrant for the application of the term 'Spiritual Adultery' to Anti-Trinitarianism. It is in fact the language of the Holy Ghost, which Mr. Wright terms 'low and grovelling,' and therefore he probably will not hesitate to give the same mild names to the still sterner language in 2 Peter chap. ii. where, besides the severe expressions above quoted, he will find his party described as 'natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed;' as persons who 'SPEAK EVIL OF THE THINGS THEY UNDERSTAND NOT—*sporting* themselves with their own deceivings, having eyes full of ADULTERY' (probably spiritual adultery is here meant), 'beguiling unstable souls—while they promise them liberty, themselves are the servants of corruption.' It is wonderful how exactly St. Peter describes what is actually going on now in this unhappy Town. O read, my dear young friends, and the awful threatenings denounced against the persons so described, and FLEE FROM THE WRATH TO COME."

And all this, from a Clergyman of the Church of England, a Master of Arts, and a "Fellow of Catharine-Hall, Cambridge"!

Mr. Wright soon sent forth an address "to the Friends of Truth and Christian Liberality in Alnwick and its Vicinity," in which our readers will perceive, from our quotations, that a very different spirit is manifested—one much more accordant, we think, with propriety and Christian truth.

"If Unitarians profess to hold the revealed Word of God as the only standard of faith and holiness,—if they profess to draw their doctrines from the sacred fountains of Eternal Truth,—is it not going back to the ages of darkness, is it not following the very course which was long adopted by the supporters of 'Mother Church,' to warn or debar people from attending such lectures? Is it the preacher who professes to hold the primitive doctrines of Christianity, who insists upon the preaching of Christ and his Apostles, as the grand criterion between true and false religion,—

is it he who imitates the character of the noble Bereans, and carefully examines the Scriptures to see whether the things spoken, accord with what is written,—is it he who brings his faith to the infallible standard of the Word of God, that must be denounced as a *deceiver* and a *blasphemer*, as a colleague with the Infidel and the Atheist? And is it from lectures delivered upon those principles that the sincere Christian can dread the least danger? If the preacher professes to abide by the Word of God, and should on any occasion deviate from it, or hold a doctrine contrary to it, have people in a Christian land not Bibles of their own, with which they can compare what may be said with what is written, and would they not of themselves perceive the deception or the fraud by which any such lecturer might be wishing to mislead them? And therefore I do again say, that the admonitions which have already been given from many of the pulpits, and circulated by means of the press, have certainly a tendency to impose restraints upon the free exercise of the mind in matters of religion, to make men 'worshippers of they know not what.'—Yes, my fellow Christians, it certainly becomes the ministers of this and every other place to meet the Unitarian, or even the Unbeliever or the Atheist, by argument only. It is not to tell you, that you have no right to investigate. It is not to say, that this man is a *deceiver*, or that a *blasphemer*, without giving you the clearest evidence that he really is such."

"Mr. Procter also charges me with an attempt '*to excite a spirit of insubordination* in *schoolboys, apprentices, and servants.*' I wonder in what part of my address the lynx-eyed Mr. P. has found such an attempt manifested. If it is in that part of it, where I have earnestly called upon all Christians to take nothing for granted upon such a momentous question as that of religion,—to examine the Scriptures for themselves, and to compare one passage with another, and one chapter with another—to attend particularly to the discourses of Jesus Christ—to obey his precepts and follow his example,—if this will 'excite a spirit of insubordination,' it is that spirit which every Christian minister, every disciple of Jesus, ought to excite. In that way I am certainly endeavouring to excite a spirit of insubordination to the yoke of ignorance—to the gloom of superstition—to the thraldom of vice—to the chains of degradation, and to the snares of iniquity;—and I only wish that it was in my power to extend such a spirit beyond the scene of my present labours. It is my grief that this state of subordination is so universal,—that those powers of darkness have so long held their sway over the minds of men,—that they have for so many ages disfigured the glorious image in which man was at first created,—that they have so long been as bulwarks opposed to that heavenly truth which Jesus our Lord and Master endeavoured to promulgate.—I lament that those powers of darkness have so long opposed the spread of the Messiah's kingdom,—have so long made man the enemy of man, and I trust it will always be my object to excite a spirit of insubordination in their votaries."

(To be Continued.)

To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.

Sir,

The Editor of the Belfast News-Letter has lately honoured the Pioneer with occasional notice. This gentleman having a taste for polemical divinity, has long afflicted his readers with learned disquisitions on the Popish controversy. He professes himself to be a true disciple of the Church as by law established in Ireland, and, of course, a firm believer in the Athanasian creed, with all its contradictions, and damnatory clauses. And yet, with marvellous inconsistency, he denounces the poor Roman Catholic, for being so absurd as to receive, with implicit faith, the doctrine of the real presence, and to regard all, without the pale of his communion, as wanderers from the path of life. He is, doubtless, attached to all the forms and ceremonies of the Church of Ireland, including bowing towards the east, the cross in baptism, the ring in marriage, consecration of burying-grounds, absolution of the sick, &c. &c.; and yet, would exclude from many of the blessings of our Constitution, the sincere disciple of the Church of Rome, because he goes a little beyond him in superstition and absurdity.

The dull pedantry of this laborious trifler might provoke a smile, were it not, that it has a tendency to foster a spirit of bigotry and intolerance, and to perpetuate those civil and religious dissensions that have so long afflicted this unhappy land. And yet he would persuade us, and perhaps has really persuaded himself, that he is solely actuated by a wish to maintain the purity of our faith; and, that the intolerant enactments of which our Roman Catholic brethren so justly complain, are necessary for the preservation of the Church of Christ. It is thus, that presumptuous men attempt to uphold the ark of the testimony of the Lord, by unhallowed means of human device. These vain endeavours are thus admirably characterized, in a speech of Sir George Saville, in the House of Commons, on an application for relief from subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles:—"Some gentlemen talk of raising barriers about the Church of God, and protecting his honour! Language that is astonishing, that is shocking, that almost approaches to blasphemy. What! man! a poor, vile, contemptible reptile, talk of raising barriers about the Church of God! He might as well talk of protecting Omnipotence, and raising barriers about his

throne. Barriers about the Church of God!—about that Church, which, if there be any veracity in Scripture, shall continue for ever, and against which, the gates of hell shall not prevail! If I may be allowed, on so serious an occasion, to recollect a fable, it puts me in mind of one which I have met with, of a stately, magnificent, impregnable castle, built on a rock, the basis of which was the centre of the earth; the top of it pierced the clouds; the thickness of the walls could not be measured by cubits. At the bottom of it, a few moles were one day very busy in raising up a little quantity of earth; which, when some mice saw, What are you doing, said they, to disturb the tranquillity of the lord of the castle? We are not disturbing his tranquillity, replied the moles; all blind as you are, you may see, that we are only throwing up a rampart to protect his castle. The Church of God can protect itself. Truth needs not be afraid of obtaining the victory on a fair trial. The lovers of truth will love all sincere inquirers after it, though they may differ from them in various religious sentiments. For it is to impartial and free inquiry only, that error owes its ruin, and truth its success. Those who are penetrated with the benevolent spirit of the Gospel, will not condemn as heretics, will not reject as unworthy of their affection, any who believe the Christian religion, who search and endeavour to understand the Scripture, though they may be unable to comply with creeds and articles."

As a kind of relaxation from the usual labour of holding up the unfortunate Roman Catholic to public detestation, as a creature unworthy the rights and privileges of human nature, the News-Letter Editor has turned aside, to give his opinion of the Pioneer. But, instead of troubling himself with examining the publication, or discussing the principles which it advocates, he boldly decides that it is a Socinian work, and therefore undeserving his countenance and protection! Such hasty and uncandid censures will be duly appreciated, and cannot fail to excite inquiry respecting a work which has thus been condemned, without even the form of a trial. When the celebrated Taylor of Norwich published his work on the Epistle to the Romans, an Orthodox Presbyterian divine, who resided a few miles from Belfast, in the bitterness of his spirit, denounced it from his pulpit, and solemnly warned his flock against reading a book filled with such detestable heresies!

A few weeks after, having called upon Mr. John Hay, a respectable bookseller in Belfast, he was surprised and mortified at being presented with a copy of the abominable work, as a mark of gratitude for the notice which he had taken of it, as the curiosity of the people had been powerfully awakened, and the demand from that neighbourhood had been quite unprecedented. I hope that your very respectable agent for Ireland, Mr. John Hay Hodgson, who is a grand-nephew of the above-mentioned eminent bookseller, will be enabled to give an equally favourable report of the sale of the Pioneer; and that he will accommodate the Editor of the News-Letter with at least a reading of the publication, that he may be relieved in future, from the awkwardness of deciding on the merits of a work which he has never perused.

The friends of toleration, and "fearless free inquiry," have no cause to feel the slightest alarm. Their principles, bearing with them the resistless force of truth, have gone forth throughout the world, "conquering and to conquer." And who can hope to impede the march of knowledge—who can say to the inquiring mind, "hitherto shalt thou go, and no farther?" Illiberal men, in all the presumptuousness of folly, may attempt to set boundaries to the intellectual energies of man; but the tide rolls on, in defiance of all the barriers which puny mortals have raised.

AN IRISH PRESBYTERIAN.

COUNTY of ANTRIM, March 12, 1827.

A Discourse, preached at the Dedication of the Second Congregational Unitarian Church, New-York, December 7, 1826: *By Dr. Channing.*—Mark xii. 29, 30.

WE have assembled to dedicate this building to the worship of the only living and true God, and to the teaching of the religion of his son, Jesus Christ. By this act we do not expect to confer on this spot of ground and these walls any peculiar sanctity or any mysterious properties. We do not suppose that, in consequence of rites now performed, the worship offered here will be more acceptable than prayer uttered in the closet, or breathed from the soul in the midst of business; or that the instructions delivered from this pulpit will be more effectual, than if they were uttered in a private dwelling or the open air. By

dedication, we understand only a solemn expression of the purpose for which this building is reared, joined with prayer to Him, who alone can crown our enterprise with success, that our design may be accepted and fulfilled. For this religious act we find, indeed, no precept in the New Testament, and on this account some have scrupled as to its propriety. But we are not among those who consider the written Word as a statute-book, by the letter of which every step in life must be governed. We believe, on the other hand, that one of the great excellences of Christianity is, that it does not deal in minute regulation, but that, having given broad views of duty, and enjoined a pure and disinterested spirit, it leaves us to apply these rules and express this spirit, according to the promptings of the divine monitor within us, and according to the claims and exigencies of the ever varying conditions in which we are placed. We believe, too, that revelation is not intended to supersede God's other modes of instruction; that it is not intended to drown, but to make more audible, the voice of nature. Now nature dictates the propriety of such an act as we are this day assembled to perform. Nature has always taught men, on the completion of an important structure, designed for public and lasting good, to solemnize its first appropriation to the purpose for which it was reared, by some special service. To us there is a sacredness in this moral instinct, in this law written on the heart; and in listening reverently to God's dictates, however conveyed, we doubt not that we shall enjoy his acceptance and blessing.

I have said, we dedicate this building to the teaching of the gospel of Christ. But in the present state of the Christian church, these words are not as definite as they one day will be. This gospel is variously interpreted. It is preached in various forms. Christendom is parcelled out into various sects. When, therefore, we see a new house of worship reared, the question immediately rises, To what mode of teaching Christianity, is it to be devoted? I need not tell you, my hearers, that this house has been built by that class of Christians, who are called Unitarians, and that the gospel will here be taught, as interpreted by that body of believers. This you all know; but perhaps all present have not attached a very precise meaning to the word, by which our particular views of Christianity are designated. Unitarianism has been made

a term of so much reproach, and has been uttered in so many tones of alarm, horror, indignation, and scorn, that to many it gives only a vague impression of something monstrous, impious, unutterably perilous. To such, I would say, that this doctrine, which is considered by some, as the last and most perfect invention of Satan, the consummation of his blasphemies, the most cunning weapon ever forged in the fires of hell, amounts to this—That there is One God, even the Father; and that Jesus Christ is not this One God, but his son and messenger, who derived all his powers and glories from the Universal Parent, and who came into the world not to claim supreme homage for himself, but to carry up the soul to his Father, as the Only Divine Person, the Only Ultimate Object of religious worship. To us, this doctrine seems not to have steamed up from hell, but to have descended from the throne of God, and to invite and attract us thither. To us it seems to come from the Scriptures, with a voice loud as the sound of many waters, and as articulate and clear as if Jesus, in a bodily form, were pronouncing it distinctly in our ears. To this doctrine, and to Christianity interpreted in consistency with it, we dedicate this building.

That we desire to propagate this doctrine, we do not conceal. It is a treasure, which we wish not to confine to ourselves, which we dare not lock up in our own breasts. We regard it as given to us for others as well as for ourselves. We should rejoice to spread it through this great city, to carry it into every dwelling, and to send it far and wide to the remotest settlements of our country. Am I asked, why we wish this diffusion? We dare not say, that we are in no degree influenced by sectarian feeling; for we see it raging around us, and we should be more than men, were we wholly to escape an epidemic passion. We do hope, however, that our main purpose and aim is not sectarian, but to promote a purer and nobler piety than now prevails. We are not induced to spread our opinions, by the mere conviction that they are true; for there are many truths, historical, metaphysical, scientific, literary, which we have no anxiety to propagate. We regard them as the highest, most important, most efficient truths, and therefore demanding a firm testimony, and earnest efforts to make them known.

In thus speaking, we do not mean, that we regard our peculiar views as essential to salvation. Far from us be

this spirit of exclusion, the very spirit of antichrist, the worst of all the delusions of Popery and of Protestantism. We hold nothing to be essential, but the simple and supreme dedication of the mind, heart, and life, to God and to his will. This inward and practical devotedness to the Supreme Being, we are assured, is attained and accepted under all the forms of Christianity. We believe, however, that it is favoured by that truth which we maintain, as by no other system of faith. We regard Unitarianism as peculiarly the friend of inward, living, practical religion. For this we value it. For this we would spread it; and we desire none to embrace it, but such as shall seek and derive from it this celestial influence.

This character and property of Unitarian Christianity, its fitness to promote true, deep, and living piety, being our chief ground of attachment to it, and our chief motive for dedicating this house to its inculcation, I have thought proper to make this the topic of my present discourse. I do not propose to prove the truth of Unitarianism by scriptural authorities, for this argument would exceed the limits of a sermon, but to show its superior tendency to form an elevated religious character. If, however, this position can be sustained, I shall have contributed no weak argument in support of the truth of our views; for the chief purpose of Christianity undoubtedly is, to promote piety, to bring us to God, to fill our souls with that Great Being, to make us alive to Him; and a religious system can carry no more authentic mark of a divine original, than its obvious, direct, and peculiar adaptation to quicken and raise the mind to its Creator. In speaking thus of Unitarian Christianity as promoting *piety*, I ought to observe, that I use this word in its proper and highest sense. I mean not every thing which bears the name of piety, for under this title superstition, fanaticism, and formality, are walking abroad and claiming respect. I mean not an anxious frame of mind, not abject and slavish fear, not a dread of hell, not a repetition of forms, not church-going, not loud profession, not severe censures of others' irreligion; but filial love and reverence towards God, habitual gratitude, cheerful trust, ready obedience, and, though last not least, an imitation of the ever active and unbounded benevolence of the Creator.

The object of this discourse, requires me to speak with great freedom of different systems of religion. But let

me not be misunderstood. Let not the uncharitableness, which I condemn, be lightly laid to my charge. Let it be remembered, that I speak only of systems, not of those who embrace them. In setting forth, with all simplicity, what seem to me the good or bad tendencies of doctrines, I have not a thought of giving standards or measures by which to estimate the virtue or vice of their professors. Nothing would be more unjust, than to decide on men's characters from their peculiarities of faith; and the reason is plain. Such peculiarities are not the only causes which impress and determine the mind. Our nature is exposed to innumerable other influences. If indeed a man were to know nothing but his creed, were to meet with no human beings but those who adopt it, were to see no example and to hear no conversation, but such as were formed by it; if his creed were to meet him every where, and to exclude every other object of thought; then his character might be expected to answer to it with great precision. But our Creator has not shut us up in so narrow a school. The mind is exposed to an infinite variety of influences, and these are multiplying with the progress of society. Education, friendship, neighbourhood, public opinion, the state of society, "the genius of the place" where we live, books, events, the pleasures and business of life, the outward creation, our physical temperament, and innumerable other causes, are perpetually pouring in upon the soul, thoughts, views, and emotions; and these influences are so complicated, so peculiarly combined in the case of every individual, and so modified by the original susceptibilities and constitution of every mind, that on no subject is there greater uncertainty than on the formation of character. To determine the precise operation of a religious opinion, amidst this host of influences, surpasses human power. A great truth may be completely neutralized by the countless impressions and excitements, which the mind receives from other sources; and so a great error may be disarmed of much of its power, by the superior energy of other and better views, of early habits, and of virtuous examples. Nothing is more common than to see a doctrine believed without swaying the will. Its efficacy depends, not on the assent of the intellect, but on the place which it occupies in the thoughts, on the distinctness and vividness with which it is conceived, on its association with our common ideas, on its frequency of recurrence, and on its command

of the attention, without which it has no life. Accordingly, pernicious opinions are not seldom held by men of the most illustrious virtue. I mean not then, in commending or condemning systems, to pass sentence on their professors. I know the power of the mind to select from a multifarious system, for its habitual use, those features or principles which are generous, pure, and ennobling, and by these to sustain its spiritual life amidst the nominal profession of many errors. I know that a creed is one thing, as written in a book, and another, as it exists in the minds of its advocates. In the book, all the doctrines appear in equally strong and legible lines. In the mind, many are faintly traced and seldom recurred to, whilst others are inscribed as with sunbeams, and are the chosen, constant lights of the soul. Hence, in good men of opposing denominations, a real agreement may subsist as to their vital principles of faith; and amidst the division of tongues, there may be unity of soul, and the same internal worship of God. By these remarks, I do not mean that error is not evil, or that it bears no pernicious fruit. Its tendencies are always bad. But I mean, that these tendencies exert themselves amidst so many counteracting influences; and that injurious opinions so often lie dead, through the want of mixture with the common thoughts, through the mind's not absorbing them, and changing them into its own substance; that the highest respect may, and ought to be, cherished for men, in whose creed we find much to disapprove. In this discourse I shall speak freely, and some may say severely, of Trinitarianism; but I love and honour not a few of its advocates; and in opposing what I deem their error, I would on no account detract from their worth. After these remarks, I hope that the language of earnest discussion and strong conviction will not be construed into the want of that charity, which I acknowledge as the first grace of our religion.

I now proceed to illustrate and prove the superiority of Unitarian Christianity, as a means of promoting a deep and noble piety.

I. Unitarianism is a system most favourable to piety, because it presents to the mind *one, and only one, Infinite Person*, to whom supreme homage is to be paid. It does not weaken the energy of religious sentiment, by dividing it among various objects. It collects and concentrates the soul on One Father, of unbounded, undivided, unrivalled

glory. To Him, it teaches the mind to rise through all beings. Around Him, it gathers all the splendours of the universe. To Him, it teaches us to ascribe whatever good we receive or behold, the beauty and magnificence of nature, the liberal gifts of providence, the capacities of the soul, the bonds of society, and especially the riches of grace and redemption, the mission, and powers, and beneficent influences of Jesus Christ. All happiness it traces up to the Father, as the sole source; and the mind, which these views have penetrated, through this intimate association of every thing exciting and exalting in the universe, with One Infinite Parent, can and does offer itself up to him with the intensest and profoundest love, of which human nature is susceptible. The Trinitarian indeed professes to believe in one God. But three persons, having distinctive qualities and relations, of whom one is sent and another the sender, one is given and another the giver, of whom one intercedes and another hears the intercession, of whom one takes flesh, and another never becomes incarnate,—three persons, thus discriminated, are as truly three objects to the mind, as if they were acknowledged to be separate divinities; and from the principles of our nature, they cannot act on the mind as deeply and powerfully as One Infinite Person, to whose sole goodness all happiness is ascribed. To multiply infinite objects for the heart, is to distract it. To scatter the attention among three equal persons, is to impair the power of each. The more strict and absolute the unity of God, the more easily and intimately all the impressions and emotions of piety flow together, and are condensed into one glowing thought, one thrilling love. No language can express the absorbing energy of the thought of One Infinite Father. When vitally implanted in the soul, it grows and gains strength for ever. It enriches itself by every new view of God's word and works; gathers tribute from all regions and all ages; and attracts into itself all the rays of beauty, glory, and joy, in the material and spiritual creation.

My hearers, as you would feel the full influence of God upon your souls, guard sacredly, keep unobscured and unsullied, that fundamental and glorious truth, that there is One, and only one Almighty Agent in the universe, One Infinite Father. Let this truth dwell in me in its uncorrupted simplicity, and I have the spring and nutriment of an ever-growing piety. I have an object for my

mind, towards which all things bear me. I know whither to go in all trial, whom to bless in all joy, whom to adore in all I behold. But let three persons claim from me supreme homage, and claim it on different grounds, one for sending and another for coming to my relief, and I am divided, distracted, perplexed. My frail intellect is overborne. Instead of One Father, on whose arm I can rest, my mind is torn from object to object, and has reason to tremble lest among so many claimants of supreme love, it should withhold from one or another his due.

(To be Continued.)

REVIEW.

A Plain Statement of the Evidences of Christianity: divided into short Chapters, with Questions annexed to each, designed for the use of Schools, Sunday Schools, and Young Persons. By Francis Knowles. London, Wightman & Cramp; J. Brown, Wigan.

We are not content with the information that is usually imparted in Sunday Schools. It is not enough in amount; it is not adequate in kind. The adoption of the system of mutual instruction, developed by Lancaster, and improved by others, would enable the same number of teachers as are now employed, to communicate a much larger portion of information than is communicated at present; while we would introduce into the Sunday School the means of instructing children in the works, as well as the Word of God.

We have seen an outline of natural history, which we deem admirably calculated to interest the minds even of children, whilst it tended, by the subject on which it treated, and the reflections which were either interwoven or appended to the narrative, to lead the mind to the recognition, adoration, and love of the great Author of Creation.

Even those who will not go with us so far as to admit such treatises into our Sunday Schools, can hardly doubt the propriety of teaching the higher classes, the evidence on which the divinity of our religion rests its claims. Every one must see the importance of furnishing the minds of the young with the means of rational conviction, and especially, in a day when the question of the authority of Christianity, is debated in every quarter. The young,

of all others, are most exposed to some of the weapons of the unbeliever. Ridicule has an especial effect with the light-heartedness of youth. And many, at least of those who have renounced Christianity, may date their dereliction, from the joyous period when whatever excites the laugh is eagerly welcomed. How is it, then, that the important subject of the evidences of Christianity, has been neglected in the Sunday School? It cannot be pretended, that those who are there educated, are more secure than other classes of society, from the attacks of unbelievers. The reverse is the case. Partly, we apprehend, this neglect may have originated in the want of a book suitable for the place and the object. In the work, the title of which is placed at the head of this notice, that want is supplied. Mr. Knowles has rendered a most important service to Christianity. His work is simple in its language—well arranged in its form—and embodying in its matter, whatever is most essential to a right conception of the question on which he writes. The author tells us, that it has been his wish to render his work as plain and simple as possible. This quality is more difficult to attain than many may imagine; and, frequently, when it is attained—other qualities, subordinate we grant, but still important—elegance and correctness of phraseology, are too often sacrificed. Mr. Knowles has, happily, written simply, and at the same time correctly and elegantly. His style suits children; it suits the scholar equally well. Questions are annexed to short chapters, "from a conviction of this plan being best calculated to lead young people to think, and to understand what they learn. The form of mere question and answer has, in general, failed to produce these happy effects. Knowledge, if thus acquired, is often acquired by rote, and retained in the same manner," and we would add, or lost almost as soon as acquired. This little work, designed as it is for the Sunday School, is free from all party-questions and bias. It is left to the professors of each denomination, to teach what doctrines they may choose. This is as it should be; and we wish that the said professors would leave the infant mind, at least, unencumbered by any kind of doctrines, except such as unite the suffrages of all parties. The work is completed in seven numbers, price two-pence each. We thank Mr. Knowles for the work; and especially, that, by its cheapness, he has rendered it generally accessible. G. C. S.

Addresses, with Prayers and original Hymns: for the use of Families & Schools. By a Lady. London: Hunter.

An interesting little volume. The authoress is already known by her "Devotional Exercises," and many other works, intended to benefit the rising generation. The work now before us is admirably adapted to promote the piety of children; and is alike suited to the family, the school, and the Sunday-school. The volume breathes a spirit of genuine Christianity; the language in which the ideas are couched, is upon a level with common understandings, while it will improve the style and conversation of those who have enjoyed a good education. It is delightful to witness this attempt to introduce rational piety into the nursery; and we wish it, with all our hearts, God speed. The subjects on which our authoress has written, are—the omnipresence of God; the duty of prayer; the duty of praise; the character of Christ, an evidence of the divinity of his mission; the virtues which should distinguish childhood; the purposes to be answered by the acquisition of knowledge; perfect knowledge will produce perfect obedience; the widow's mite; subjection to the gospel yoke, true freedom; diligence in action, necessary to salvation; patience in suffering, necessary to salvation; and, on death. A prayer and a hymn accompany each address; and, in the preface, we are informed, that if these Addresses are found to be of service, another volume may be expected.

THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

Glasgow, *March* 31, 1827.

The American Unitarian Association, celebrated their First Anniversary, on the evening of June 30, 1826, in the Pantheon Hall, in Boston, Massachusets. The meeting was opened with prayer, by the Rev. Dr. Bancroft, the President of the Association. We have great pleasure, in making the following extracts from the Report of the Committee.

They have been favoured with letters from Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, Rhode Island, from all sections of this State, from New-York, and from the western part of the State of New-York, from Philadelphia, Harrisburg, Northumberland,

Pittsburg, and Meadville in Pennsylvania, from Maryland, from the District of Columbia, from South Carolina, from Kentucky, and from Indiana. In all these letters, the same interest is exhibited in the efforts which the Association promises to make for the diffusion of pure Christianity. Many of them have contained interesting accounts of the state of religion in different places, and especially correspondents have furnished the Committee with ample details respecting the history and condition of Unitarians in Pennsylvania. If similar accounts could be obtained from all the states of the Union, they would embody an amount of knowledge, that is now much wanted. And the Committee avail themselves of this opportunity to remind Unitarians, that they will render a service to the cause of truth, by communicating facts connected with the progress and present state of Unitarian Christianity. The existence of a body of Christians in the Western States, who have for years been Unitarians, have encountered persecution on account of their faith, and have lived in ignorance of others east of the mountains, who maintained many similar views of Christian doctrine, has attracted the attention of the Committee. Measures have been taken to ascertain more correctly the situation and character of this fraternity, who have adopted various names significant of their attachment to freedom of inquiry, and to a purer gospel than that embraced by other sects, and who, though they have refused to assume the title, openly avow themselves Unitarians. With two ministers of this body, a correspondence has been continued for some time. The Committee have watched with peculiar interest, the growth of the *Christian* Connexion, which is daily becoming more numerous and respectable. From members of that body, they have received expressions of fraternal regard; and although there should not be a more intimate union between these disciples and ourselves, than now exists, yet we rejoice that they have the same great work at heart, and we doubt not will prosecute it perseveringly and successfully. The need of a more exact knowledge than can be obtained from books, or even from correspondence, induced the Committee to employ an agent, whose sole business it should be, by actual observation, to make himself familiar with the religious condition of the Middle and Western States. This gentleman is now on a tour through Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois. He will probably spend some months in the journey, and has been directed to collect and transmit to the Committee, whatever facts in the ecclesiastical history of those States he may obtain, as well as the result of his inquiries and observation concerning the present feelings and condition of the people. The Committee do not possess such information as would enable them to give an estimate of the number of Unitarian congregations in our country. Of New-England it would be difficult to speak with certainty. There are in almost every town Unitarians, in many towns of Massachusets they constitute the majority, in many more they have respectable, though not large churches, but in far the greater number of parishes in New-England they are still blended with other sects, and either

from a distrust of their own strength, or from a reluctance to disturb the quiet of a religious society, or from local reasons, they make small exertions to secure such an administration of the gospel, as may accord with their convictions of truth. The number of these silent Unitarians is increasing, and, at the same time, more are manifesting a determination to assert their rights as citizens and as Christians. The Committee conceive that they have sufficient evidence of the increase of Unitarians in New-England, especially in Maine, in some parts of New-Hampshire, and in the valley of the Connecticut in Massachusets. They say this gladly, but not boastingly. The progress of correct opinions has been more rapid than their supporters could have expected for them. They are introducing themselves into every village, and have given peace and joy to many who are yet unknown to the company of their brethren. Before another anniversary, the Committee trust that they from whom the annual report shall proceed, will be able to present an exact statement of the number of Unitarian churches and ministers in the northern section of our Union. They do not attempt it now, because they have not the means of making it complete. In the Middle States also, Unitarianism is constantly acquiring new adherents. The erection of a *second* church in New-York, the increased prosperity of the society in Philadelphia, and the commencement of a building for Unitarian worship in Harrisburg, the seat of government of Pennsylvania, are auspicious circumstances. From the Southern and Western divisions of our land, it is presumed that future correspondence and the communications of agents will furnish intelligence equally gratifying. We are assured that the society in Charleston, S. C. continues to prosper, that there are several churches in North Carolina, and that Unitarians are numerous in the States which lie west of the Alleghany mountains.

The Committee have been, indeed, indefatigable in their exertions. They have published 17,000 copies of their first four tracts [the tenth tract has reached us], have employed our excellent and esteemed friend, the Rev. James Kay, of Northumberland, Pennsylvania, as a Missionary; and have assisted, by a liberal donation, the erection of a Chapel at Harrisburg. We look forward with pleasure and confidence to the future operations of the Association. As the Committee remark, too, "the coincidence is worthy of notice, that the British and Foreign Unitarian Association and the American Association, were organised on the same day, for the same objects, and without the least previous concert." They have also commenced corresponding with Unitarians in India, and "are taking measures to open a correspondence with Unitarians on the continent of Europe, and are especially desirous to establish friendly relations with their brethren in France, Switzerland, and Transylvania."

We have received Mr. Little's funeral sermon on the death of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, names which no title could adorn, and no pomp make more glorious. The text is Job v. 25, 26. Our readers will, we are persuaded, be gratified by the following quotations.

"The constantly increasing strength of the nation, its union at home, and its respect abroad; the extension of its borders, the addition to its States, the evident stability of the institutions of its government, administered by so many different men, were all calculated to fill them with sublime pleasure, and reconcile them to the inevitable destiny of human beings; saying, "Lord, let thy servants depart in peace; for our eyes have seen thy salvation." But there was a richer glory reserved for their departure. Men had honoured them in their lives, but the Great Arbiter of human existence resolved, that if their course had been glorious, its conclusion "should exceed in glory." He intended, by one great act of his providence, which should stand alone on the page of history, without any parallel, that, with all the infirmities of extreme age, they should survive to witness the arrival of the first Jubilee of the Nation's Independence, which they achieved, and wisely directed to such benefits as were unknown to the world before; and then, amidst the shouts of joy from every mountain, and through every vale, where twelve millions of the human race are spread abroad; while the roar of cannons, and the inspiration of music, and boundless festivity, were proclaiming the exultations of freemen in their rich inheritance, *they*, both conscious of the fact, and thankful for having seen the light of that blessed day, closed their eyes upon the world, without a wish ungratified, and ascended to the presence of their God."

The extract we now make, is from a letter of Thomas Jefferson, to a member of the Society of Friends, written in 1813.

"No subject has occupied more of my consideration, than our relations with all the beings around us, our duties, and our future prospect. After hearing all which probably can be suggested concerning them, I have formed the best judgment I could, as to the course they prescribe, and in the due observation of that course I have no recollections which give me uneasiness. An eloquent preacher of your religious society, Richard Mott, in a discourse of much unction and pathos, is said to have exclaimed aloud to his congregation, that 'he did not believe there was a Quaker, Presbyterian, Methodist, or Baptist in Heaven.' Having paused to give his congregation time to stare and wonder, he added, that in 'Heaven, God knows no distinction, but considered all good men as his children, and brethren of the same family.'

"I believe with the Quaker preacher, that he who observes the moral precepts, in which all religions concur, will never be questioned at the gates of Heaven, as to the dogmas, in which all differ; that, on entering there, the Aristides and Catos, the Penns and Tillotsons, Presbyterians and Baptists, will find themselves

united in all the principles which are in concert with the Supreme Mind. Of all the systems of morality, ancient and modern, which have come under my observation, none appears to me as pure as that of Jesus. He who follows this steadily, need not, I think, be uneasy, although he cannot comprehend the subtleties and mysteries erected on his doctrines, by those who, calling themselves his special followers and favourites, would make him come into the world to lay snares for all understandings but theirs. Their metaphysical heads, usurping the judgment-seat of God, denounce as his enemies, all who cannot perceive the geometrical logic of Euclid, in the demonstrations of St. Athanasius,—that three are one and one are three! In all essential points, you and I are of the same religion, and I am too old to go into unessentials. Repeating, therefore, my thankfulness for the kind concern you have been so good as to express, I salute you with friendship and brotherly love."

Mr. Little's description of his interview with John Adams, is truly delightful.

"I have seen the 'Sage of Quincy,' sitting in the modest parlour of his neat, but homely dwelling, surrounded with plain and useful furniture, but nothing ornamental or imposing, save his own silvery locks hanging down from each side of his head, and reaching to the shoulders, bending under a weight of years, as he sat on his little settee behind the door, on which he would occasionally extend and rest his weary frame. It is now more than five years since, on a visit to the east, I had the delightful, never to be forgotten, gratification of seeing this genuine, unaffected exhibition of truly republican simplicity and incorruptible virtue, and partaking with him and his grand-children in the same apartment, without officious ceremony or starched formality (the deadly enemies of wisdom and virtuous friendship), of one of those plain, hearty, and frugal repasts, which distinguish the happy domestic circles of the New-England yeomanry. At that time, though weak, and daily declining, a little excitement was sufficient to rouse him to converse, with great energy, upon any subject connected with his country, or the interests of mankind. He spoke of America, of Europe, of the City of Washington, and of his son, with evidences of the deep interest he felt in all that was going on. 'And you, Sir,' said he, 'are employed, I find, in calling the attention of the citizens of Washington, to religion divested of the corruptions which perverse and mistaken men have mixed up with it—to Christianity as it was taught by its Founder and the Apostles. You are right, and must succeed; it is the truth you are teaching, and it will outlive all opposition. The present prevailing notions of Christian sects must be reformed, or else all enlightened and liberal men, will abandon the Christian profession; they have bewildered themselves in the unaccountable and inexplicable jargon of scholastic theology, and want to be brought back to common sense, and the Bible. I have had these views of religion for more than fifty years, and, in the course of time, all men of learning and reflection will come to the same conclusions.' He

said much more of the same kind, perhaps in varied language, but this was the substance. When we parted, he affectionately took my hand, and on wishing him a long continuance of the comforts of an honoured, virtuous, and pious old age, he expressed, with feelings that required an effort for their suppression, his perfect resignation to the supreme will of God, who knew best, when, and how to remove him to a better state of being."

We are indebted to the Christian Examiner for Nov. and Dec. 1826, for the following interesting account of the rise and progress of Unitarianism in New-York.

"Only a few years have passed since the very name of Unitarianism was scarcely known among us. The number of those who professed Unitarian sentiments, was limited to about half a dozen persons who had acquired these views in another quarter of our country.

"In the year 1819, a year which will form an epoch in the history of Unitarianism in America, the Rev. Mr. Channing, on his journey to Baltimore to assist in the ordination of Mr. Sparks, passed a Sunday in New-York, and preached to about thirty persons at the house where he lodged. A very large proportion of his hearers were orthodox, and his sermon was not doctrinal. It was a serious exposition of the dangers and temptations to which the dwellers in a large city are peculiarly exposed, and it left a favourable impression on the minds of his audience.—This was probably the first sermon delivered in New-York by a Unitarian preacher, and may be considered as the germ of liberal views in this city.

Mr. Channing was invited by a few friends to preach again on his return from Baltimore. In the expectation that a larger audience might be attracted, application was made to the Trustees of the Medical College for the use of their Hall. It was granted, but not without a spirited opposition on the part of some of the medical professors; and any subsequent application for the same purpose was prevented, by an intimation that it would probably prove unsuccessful, and would, at all events, be embarrassing to the personal friends of the applicants at the board.

"The first public worship in this city, of the *One God in one person*, was on the 16th May, 1819. The services were conducted by the Reverend Messrs. Channing and Palfrey, and both morning and evening were attended by a crowded congregation of a highly respectable character. In the evening particularly, the hall was overflowing at a very early hour.

"So great an interest appeared to have been excited in the public mind by the services of that day, that it was determined by the little band of Unitarians, to take measures to procure a suitable place for social religious worship. Their views, at first, did not extend beyond the means of availing themselves of those occasional opportunities for Unitarian worship, which circumstances might offer, and which, since the establishment of the

church at Baltimore, might now be expected more frequently to occur. The meeting convened to consult on measures for this object, consisted of but eight persons, all young men, but little known, and of little influence or property. They had something of that character of enterprise, however, which still distinguishes their father-land, and a zeal for truth no less commendable; and, nothing daunted by paucity of numbers or resources, they resolved to call another meeting forthwith by a public notice. The advertisement on this occasion has been preserved, as having an interest in the recollections of 'this day of small things,' and as exhibiting a degree of prudent caution which harmonizes with the spirit that influenced the whole proceeding. It was in these words; 'All persons friendly to the establishment of an Independent Church in this City, upon the principles illustrated in the exercises of the last Lord's day at the Hall of the Medical College in Barclay-Street, are requested to meet at the dwelling-house, No. —— on Thursday evening.'

"This meeting called together fourteen persons; but 'not many rich, not many mighty were there.' At this meeting, a Committee was appointed to ascertain if any place suitable for public worship could be obtained, and if not, to report an estimate and plans for building one. In pursuance of these measures, a large room was hired in Broadway, at the corner of Reed-Street; and here, from June 1819 to January 1821, with few intervals, religious services were performed by the ordained clergy of Boston and its vicinity.

"The corner-stone of the church in Chamber-Street, was laid on the 29th of April, 1820, with appropriate religious services by the Rev. Henry Ware, Jun., and was dedicated by the Rev. Edward Everett, on the 20th of January, 1821. From the time this house was opened for religious worship, the society has been gradually increasing. Towards the close of the same year, they invited the Rev. William Ware to become their pastor, and he was ordained on the 18th of December, 1821.

"In the Autumn of 1825, the corner-stone of the Second Congregational Unitarian Church was laid in Mercer-Street, at the corner of Prince-Street, about a mile distant from the first church. The ceremonies were performed by the Rev. William Ware. This building was begun by a few members of the Society in Chamber-Street, who have proceeded with great economy and order to its completion. This church was dedicated on Thursday, the 7th of December, the day appointed by the Executive of the State for a day of thanksgiving, and the anniversary occasion of laying the corner-stone. At an early hour the house was thronged. The services were introduced by an original hymn from the pen of Bryant. The consecrating prayer was by the Rev. Wm. Ware; the concluding prayer by the Rev. Mr. Walker of Charlestown; the sermon by the Rev. Dr. Channing. All the services of the day were highly satisfactory. Of the sermon, it is difficult to speak in measured terms of approbation. It has been pronounced the noblest production of the very pure and original mind which composed it, and was delivered with an effect which will never be forgotten by those who heard it."

Methodist Unitarians.

We give an additional twelve pages with the present Number, in order to lay before our readers, the two following letters. They are, we think, highly interesting and important; and we thank our friends sincerely for them. The first is from the Minister of that "obscure small place," Blackwater Chapel, Rochdale; and the other, from the "successor" of Mr. Cooke. We hope Mr. Slater will see the necessity of giving some explanation of his statements to Mr. Hobson. Our pages are open to him for this purpose. His character, we take it, is at stake. He has adduced charges, both against individuals and a whole denomination; he has, we think, wantonly aspersed the memory of the dead, and defamed the motives and principles of the living. He has caused the tears of the widow to flow, and has outraged the feelings of the fatherless. Let him look to it. We pause for a reply.

To the Rev. Barnard Slater, Rochdale.

Rev. Sir,

Though not personally acquainted with you, a sense of duty compels me to address to you a few remarks on the subject of your letter to the Rev. J. Hobson, which appeared in the last number of "The Christian Pioneer." Did not justice to the memory of the honoured dead, and regard to the character and feelings of the living, upbraid my silence, as the silence of neglect or shame, your letter might safely have been left to the fate to which its spirit would justly have consigned it. Though your cruelty in disturbing the ashes of the dead, and bitterness in speaking of the motives and the religious faith of the living, are at first calculated to rouse an honest indignation, I hope you will discover in what may be advanced, no marks of an uncandid or uncharitable spirit. I feel the more particularly desirous of avoiding such a spirit, from seeing how exceedingly unamiable it appears in others, and how particularly unbecoming in the ministers of Him who so frequently recommended all who would be his true disciples, to love one another "as brethren."

In the first sentence of your letter, you pronounce Mr. Harris's statement in the Christian Pioneer, respecting the Unitarian Methodists of Rochdale and its vicinity, "in the sense in which he would be understood," as absolutely un-

true. Now, in what sense did Mr. Harris wish the statement to be understood? Certainly, in no other than in that conveyed by the work to which he alluded, *viz.* "An Account of the Rise and Progress," &c. by J. Ashworth. And that the important facts mentioned in this interesting volume are untrue, you have not yet shown. Till you have done that, it is obvious to see where the absolute falsehood with which you charge Mr. Harris, in reality attaches itself. You next speak of the late worthy Rev. Joseph Cooke, and his expulsion at the Leeds Conference in August 1806. You have designated his examination as "fair, candid, and Christian," and eulogised the fathers of the Connexion who expelled him, as possessing qualities that would have done credit to an Apostle; whereas, it is a notorious fact, that Mr. Cooke was not allowed to plead his own cause before the Conference. The fairness and candour of such conduct, may not be so obvious to those who dare question the infallibility of your high tribunal; and to some who dare not openly speak against its decisions, the measure adopted by Conference, in the case before us, has no doubt often appeared to be characterised with persecution, more than either Christianity or apostolic virtue. And, with regard to the views of justification by faith, for which Mr. Cooke was expelled, and which, he has clearly shown, were entertained in the latter part of life, by Wesley himself, and by Fletcher, I ask, Are not these very views adopted by many of your preachers of the present day? Let us, then, hear no more of the Christian temper and conduct of those who ejected a brother minister from their communion, for declaring doctrines which they now either embrace or connive at. Your indirect attack of Mr. Cooke's character, must be pronounced, I should think, even by your warmest admirers, as most unmanly. His lips have long been sealed in silence; and we might have hoped, that even malevolence itself would have disdained to take an undue advantage of his rest, and have allowed him to repose in peace. It is generally the negative privilege of the grave, that there "the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." Even had the opinion you have given of Mr. Cooke's character been true, surely some little delicacy to the feelings of a bereaved partner, and an orphan family, might have been justly expected from a minister of the gospel of peace and consolation. The great precept of

Christian morality, in our conduct towards our neighbour, is, to do unto others as we should wish that they should do unto us. But, as a husband and a father, I am sure that you would deprecate such a treatment of your own character, after you had descended to the grave; and, no doubt, it would often disturb the peace of your remaining days, were you to suppose, that the tenderest feelings of your nearest relatives were to be harrowed up, at some distant time, by the cruel accusations of a brother in the ministry. And, should such a being be found in our society, immoral as you insinuate the tendency of our doctrine is, he would meet, I am confident, with marked degradation for his inhuman conduct. But I hesitate not to affirm, that the epithets you have applied to Mr. Cooke, are calculated to produce an erroneous impression of his character. Not being able to advance any thing against his moral conduct, you sit in judgment over his motives. You represent his zeal and firmness, as resulting from low and unworthy springs of action, such as self-conceit, love of innovation, and desire of popular applause; for you have characterised him, as "extremely pert and self-conceited," and as an "aspiring reformer." Now, permit me to offer you a friendly hint. If you wish such assertions to be credited, you must go to some obscure corner of the island, where the *real character* of the departed was never known, and where his printed works can never come. In Rochdale, you will meet with individuals in every street, who will vindicate his character from your aspersions; and not individuals of any particular sect, but those of various sects; yea, even in your own congregation may be found those, whose real feelings, and whose sincere counsel, would recommend you to say nothing against him. But, perhaps, you never intended your letter to be seen in Rochdale. If you only purposed that it should be circulated amongst your Methodist friends at Glasgow, your attack on the character of the dead was the more unmanly, as it was designed in such a manner as not to allow of a defence. But it is now before the public; and it remains for you either to substantiate your charges, or retract your accusations. According to the testimony of those who knew him best, Mr. Cooke was a man of ardent piety and inflexible integrity. So great was his love of truth, that, rather than shrink from its profession, he was willing to sacrifice every earthly good. Seeing sufficient

ground in the works of Wesley, and the Word of God, to differ from his brethren on the subject of "justification by faith;" and being, moreover, very popular wherever he preached, the Conference demanded of him to renounce his peculiar views. His high regard for conscience and for truth, would not allow him to make such a compromise of principle. He was, consequently, publicly expelled. But, even though thus persecuted; though he met with frowns and coldness, where he was wont to be received with cordiality—though his earthly hopes received at once a fatal blow, and he was ungenerously, with his family, cast destitute on the wide world, yet he evinced towards his opponents none other than the genuine spirit of Christian charity. But, let his own words bear testimony to his amiable feelings. In his "Vindication," speaking of the persecution he suffered from the Conference, he shows the genuineness of his Christian temper: "Charity," says he, "will ever seek to palliate, what it cannot approve." "I should be sorry," he adds in another place, "for this apparent precipitance in the Conference, to be imputed to any improper principle, since actions, wrong in themselves, may possibly originate in the best of motives. And it is but natural to ask, what but zeal for truth, could induce them to do as they have done? and admitting this to have been their motive, the reader will see cause to applaud the principle, even though he should be obliged to disapprove its effects;" such was the generous construction he put upon the conduct of those who had treated him with so much harshness. Conscious of the zeal for truth, which actuated his own conduct, with that charity which hopeth all things, he conceived that a similar motive might have given rise to the persecuting measures of his opponents. And in this, as well as in his inflexible adherence to principle, did he set an example to all who may be inclined to judge uncharitably, or succumb in matters of faith to other authority than that of private judgment. With respect to the remaining topics of your letter, unless noticed in some other way, I should wish, at some future time, to advance a few remarks. In the meantime, I hope the preceding will be received in the spirit in which they are given; and that you will believe me to remain,

Yours truly, in Christian charity,

FRANKLIN HOWORTH.

Rochdale, March 19, 1827.

To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.

SIR,

THE epistle of Mr. Slater of Rochdale, to Mr. Hobson of Glasgow, inserted in your Number for March, I consider to be indited by the pure spirit of pharisaical orthodoxy. It proceeds upon the ground—"The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we!—Stand by thyself, come not near to me, I am holier than thou!—Thou wast altogether born in sin, and dost thou teach me!" The Pharisees who felt themselves so much puzzled and perplexed, by the plain honesty of the poor man who was born blind, evidently intended to support their own dignity and sanctity, at the expense of the poor man's reputation and character; and I am much mistaken, if Mr. Slater has not gone and done likewise. He himself was brought to God thirty years since!—"Nay, Sir, should a Wesleyan occasionally look into the lives, spirit, and temper of Socinian and of Orthodox divines, he sees a striking difference between a Priestley and a Doddridge and a Wesley—a Belsham and a Fletcher!"—"Wesleyans believe that all Scripture was given by inspiration of God!"*—"Who have circulated Bibles, and religious tracts, and Christian education, and the knowledge of the divine Redeemer through the globe!"—(and why, Mr. Slater, did you not add, "Who has compassed sea and land to make proselytes!" was it because of the manner in which this sentence ends?)—Whilst "Socinians, without the least ceremony, reject certain portions of the Divine Word as unauthentic"—"bring Jesus Christ to the level of a mere man!"—"The blighting doctrines of Socinianism," &c.

I once heard an itinerant Wesleyan preacher say, "that there was preaching enough at their Conference to choke a dog." Here is fulsome flattery enough to choke a score. The degrading epithets which he so liberally bestows upon what he calls Socinian and Socinianism, excites one's compassion. But I beg leave to inform Mr. Slater, if he needs to be informed, that the Unitarians (for, if he nickname us, surely we may call ourselves by our proper name) deny no part of the Divine Word as unauthentic. If, however, Mr. Slater had said, Unitarians reject certain parts of the Scriptures, as being *no* part of the Word of God, I would have answered,—there have been, and are,

* Except Dr. A. Clarke, who believes 1 John v. 7, to be an interpolation.

Wesleyans who do so too. As to Unitarians placing other parts on a level with uninspired compositions,—I reply, so do some of you. Once in conversation with Mr. Samuel Taylor, one of your travelling preachers, I quoted to him, to prove what I was saying, a passage out of Solomon's Song; but he rejected it, observing, "that is no part of the Word of God." I was more orthodox then than I am now; but since then, I have often thought, that if the Methodist preachers would but as honestly divulge their minds as the Unitarians do, some of them would be found as deep in the dirt as they accuse us of being in the mire! But,

> "When interest and ease are so closely combin'd,
> 'Twould be strange if they did not *seem* all of one mind." *

And as to the "Unitarians bringing Jesus Christ to the level of a mere man," they, in accordance with the Scriptures, say of him, that he was "a man, approved of God, by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him." And, "blighting" as their doctrines are, they can express them in Scripture language, without addition or comment:—Can Mr. Slater do so of his?

But my principal design, Mr. Editor, in addressing you at present, is, to place in its proper light, the character of my late worthy and estimable friend, Mr. Cooke,—I say, in its proper light; but I regret that I have not the ability to portray it as it ought to be, nor to do full justice to the subject.

Mr. Cooke has now been peacefully slumbering in the dust sixteen years. No one before Mr. Slater, has attempted to disturb his repose. I need not say, that this conduct of Mr. Slater does not savour of the Christian or

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* These two lines, composed by Mr. Cooke, refer to the following curious piece of history:—After Mr. Cooke had been called before the Conference in 1805 (the year before his expulsion), Mr. Hare (afterwards his opponent), who had been severely rebuked at the same Conference by Mr. Benson, respecting his conduct towards the singers at Stockport, took Mr. Cooke by the arm, as they walked out of the chapel, and said to him, be assured you have no enemy in me; and then told him the following curious anecdote. I was once preaching in a certain place (said Mr. Hare), from Rom. viii. 16, and got foul of Mr. Wesley's notions. Mr. Benson, chancing to be within hearing, afterwards took me to task for it, when I had to make the best apology I could. After which, Mr. Benson said, *For my part, I have my doubts whether the Apostle, in that passage, meant any thing more than the witness of miracles; but I always take care never to SEEM to contradict Mr. Wesley.* (See the Hasty Sentence arrested, &c. by J. Cooke, p. 4 & 5.)

the gentleman: it is unmanly—it is dastardly. "Joseph Cooke," says he, "was rather an acute and subtle young man; but extremely pert and self-conceited,"—"who treated the advice of near two hundred well-instructed Divines with extreme indifference, not to say contempt!" Mr. Cooke was certainly the subject of much verbal calumny and persecution, from his being expelled the Methodist Connexion to his death. But I do not remember to have heard of any charge being brought against him, similar to the above, no, not even by his bitterest enemy. His doctrine was represented as a damnable heresy; but the very body that expelled him, said that he was a man of "unimpeached morals." And before his supposed heresy was known, he was uncommonly and deservedly esteemed by all who knew him; and to Mr. Slater and to him alone, belongs the honour or disgrace of the foul crime of having stabbed the character of this excellent man, when he himself was incapable of warding off the blow.

But it is proper, that those who have seen this foul charge, should also have the opportunity of seeing upon what ground it has been made. Mr. Cooke was a Methodist preacher, and he gloried in the name. He studied and laboured to be an honour and credit to the cause. In the course of his ministry, he met with many who—he believed, from the unguarded manner in which they had been taught—talked as though they believed religion consisted principally in raptures and impressions, and who made their imaginations and feelings, rather than the Word of God, the criterion of religious truth. He met with others, in whom godly sorrow had wrought true repentance, and who had broken and contrite hearts, but who could not boast of these raptures and impressions, or what was called the witness of the Spirit. On this account, they were taught to believe themselves to be in a deplorable condition, and under the wrath of God. Mr. C. was desirous, if possible, to put a stop to this prevailing error; and to do away with that reproach which he was sure it brought upon their whole body. With a view to this, he preached on these subjects; and afterwards published two sermons, in which he stated, what he conceived to be the true Methodistical sense of these subjects. For this, he was called before the Conference at Leeds, in August 1806. His manner of behaviour there, and the manner in which the Conference treated him, will be best

seen from his own account. "About eight or ten paragraphs," says he, "of my sermons were read at large in the Conference, but without the least remark being made upon them, either by way of opposition or explanation. I very naturally expected, that what was deemed objectionable in those paragraphs, would be pointed out; and that some reasons would be assigned for their being objected to. But, as several of the preachers (for reasons best known to themselves) heartily deprecated any debate in the Conference, upon their system of doctrines, a committee was appointed to converse with me upon the subject. I met the committee in the evening; and there I learned, that one point in which I was supposed to have erred was, as to the *time* and *evidence* of a man's justification, or *when* a *man may be said to be justified.* I was supposed to have taught, that, in whatever moment a sinner returns to God, according to the requisitions of the Gospel, God accepts that sinner, or his wrath no longer abides upon him; or, in other words, that the sinner is justified; and that, whether he has any comfortable persuasion of it in his own mind or not. I acknowledged the truth of this supposition, and declared my present belief in what I had so taught. This was reported to the Conference the next morning; when I confirmed the truth of the report, and declared my readiness to prove what I had taught, from the writings of Messrs. Wesley and Fletcher. It was then moved, that, if I thought myself able to do that, I ought to be heard. But this motion was overruled, by the president's observing, 'I might be able, perhaps, to quote a few insulated passages!' This prevented any appeal or discussion from taking place. And nothing now remained, but to pass sentence upon me. It was however moved, that my sentence should be deferred another day, that I (not the Conference) might farther consider the subject. To this I replied, that, if the Conference were resolved to condemn my sermons, I had no reason to think that another day or week would make any change in my opinions; and therefore desired that the matter might be brought to a conclusion. I was then desired to withdraw, while the Conference deliberated upon the subject. And, on being recalled, I was informed that I could not be considered a member of that body, while I retained my present sentiments."* And this is

* Methodism Condemned by Methodist Preachers, by J. Cooke.

that "discussion" which Mr. Slater remembers "to this day;" which left such "an *indelible impression* on his mind, and" so "*amazingly* raised the character of the preachers in his esteem, as men of *astonishing Biblical knowledge*," as men "of *great perspicuity in stating their views on divine truth*, and as stewards of *Divine Mysteries* that needed not to be ashamed!"

And this, too, is the behaviour of Mr. Cooke, which Mr. Slater calls "pert and self-conceited," and which "treated the advice of near two hundred well-instructed Divines with extreme indifference, not to say contempt!" When Mr. Slater has learned, that it is possible for a man to prefer the dictates of his conscience to every other consideration, he will then have learned, that the behaviour of Mr. Cooke before the Conference, was the behaviour of an honourable, upright, and conscientious man and Christian, deserving of the highest respect; and that such a man is worthy to be classed among the Confessors and sufferers for conscience' sake: and that his name will be hailed and blessed, when that of the cringing sycophant, who cannot afford to keep a conscience, shall be blotted from the memory of mankind, or remembered only with execration.

Mr. Slater also accuses Mr. Cooke of violating a most solemn engagement. "The misguided young man," says he, "who treated the advice of near two hundred well-instructed Divines with extreme indifference, not to say contempt, in conclusion, made a promise to make the controverted topics a matter of close study for one year; but solemnly engaged before us all, not to agitate the points, directly or indirectly, in the pulpit, or in private, among our people. On this condition, we appointed him to the Sunderland circuit. He had not been many weeks in his new station before he violated his engagement with the Conference: he furiously preached, and soon after published his erroneous sentiments." This charge, although not substantially the same as that made against Mr. Cooke by Mr. Hare, is yet so nearly allied to it, that both may be supposed to have arisen from the same source. Mr. Hare's charge is, "Contrary to your solemn engagement, and in defiance of the Conference, you published those sermons." (See Genuine Methodism acquitted, and Spurious Methodism condemned, by Edward Hare.) So that, whatever will rebut the one will rebut the other of these

charges. On this subject, Mr. Cooke shall also speak for himself.

"But you," Mr. Hare, "roundly assert, that it was 'contrary to my solemn engagement, and in defiance of the Conference, that I published my sermons.' Contrary to my solemn engagement! When, Sir? And to whom? I was going to say, surely 'truth and righteousness have fled from the face of earth;' but I would hope better things, and better things of you. You certainly must have been led into this error by dreaming, or by some one else who has dreamed, of my having made such an engagement. But it will give you an opportunity to show, on what foundation you have built this assertion, when I declare, that, if you can prove that I ever made, or was required to make, any such engagement, in public or in private, verbally or in writing, I submit to be thought a liar for ever. And the world will think its own thoughts of you, Sir, if you should not be able to substantiate so positive and serious a charge. Is there the most distant probability, that I ever should have made, or been required to make, an engagement not to publish sentiments in which I was supposed so perfectly to agree with what was then referred to as the standard; that the Conference determined to send word to Rochdale, and did send word accordingly, that they were satisfied with the account I had given of my sentiments on the subject of the witness of the Spirit! &c." (See the Hasty Sentence arrested, or Genuine Methodism fairly examined, pages 32, 33, by J. Cooke.)

I now leave the reader to judge, whether Mr. Cooke violated his engagement; and to form his own opinion of Mr. Slater, who has brought so unfounded a charge against him, near sixteen years after his death.

Mr. Cooke, after his expulsion, was invited to Rochdale, to become the minister of a great number who left the Methodist Society, and built a meeting-house, which they called Providence Chapel. Here he preached to a congregation of near 700 hearers. His labours were also extended to Newchurch, Padiham, and other places. At Newchurch, thirty or forty persons left the Methodist Society and joined him; and a few did the same at Padiham. He laboured with great diligence and usefulness in these and other places; and, by over-much study and exertion, brought upon himself a slow consumption, which terminated his useful life, in March 1811.

Before his death, he, and a considerable number of persons at the places already mentioned, had seen reason to relinquish the reputedly orthodox doctrines of Original Sin and the Atonement. But the doctrine of the Trinity and proper Deity of Christ, had not at all been discussed among them, either publicly or privately, when this sad event took place. Nor was it until Mr. Cooke's successor (as Mr. S. is pleased to call him) was expelled from Providence Chapel, that these subjects were maturely examined and given up by them. And this was done without the assistance of any books or book, except the Bible. From this source, and this only, they became what they think they now are, decided and conscientious Unitarians.

Now, Mr. Editor, when you stated in your Number for October last, that John Ashworth was the author of an interesting account of the rise and progress of the Unitarian doctrine in these Societies, formerly in connection with the Wesleyan Methodists, you meant that the persons with whom this doctrine had its rise and progress in these places, were formerly in connection with the Wesleyan Methodists. I do not see that you could gather any other meaning from the account; and your statement is true, as hundreds can testify. Mr. Slater, however, calls this an extraordinary statement; and in the sense in which Mr. Harris would be understood, affirms that it is absolutely untrue. I leave the reader to judge whether of the two statements is the more *extraordinary!*

Again, Mr. Slater says, "Since the death of Mr. Cooke, now more than sixteen years ago, not one member of the Wesleyan Society in Rochdale has joined the Socinians; but many have left the Socinians and have joined the Independents and Wesleyans." This account is certainly very incorrect, so far as regards "many" of the Socinians joining the Independents and Wesleyans. In fact, not a single Unitarian has joined the Independents; and, I believe, only two (if I say wrong let Mr. S. teach me better, and I will submit) who *professed* to hold Unitarian views have joined the Wesleyans. It is really very unpleasant, even in the defence of truth, thus to have to confront a man who believes himself to be a child of God and a minister of the truth, who ought to know better and to state things more accurately. And I can only account for this erroneous statement, from the circumstance that when Mr. Cooke's successor (so I call him because Mr. S. has

called him so) was turned from Providence Chapel, although perhaps three-fourths of the congregation left with him, the rest stopped there, and some of them go thither still, whilst some others who left, went to the Methodists; but none of us were Unitarians then. Those who stopped at Providence Chapel, and those who joined the Methodists at that time, instead of having embraced Mr. Cooke's views of Original Sin and the Atonement, opposed them. And therefore, I repeat, that not a single Unitarian has left us and joined the Independents, nor the Methodists either, except as before stated. And, if Mr. Slater does not choose to accept this explanation of his erroneous statement, let him abide, as he says he is "prepared to abide," by the *facts* he has stated, and prove them if he can.

JOHN ASHWORTH.

NEWCHURCH, ROSSENDALE, LANCASHIRE,
17*th March*, 1827.

To these communications we only add, that the subject will be resumed in our Magazine for May.

West of England.—It must be highly encouraging to every practical believer in the doctrines of Christian Unitarianism, to hear of the zeal with which our friends in the West of England are exerting themselves. Marshfield, a station in the district of the Somerset, Gloucester, and Wilts Unitarian Missionary Association, is a striking instance. About two years ago, when the Committee of the Association first directed their attention to it, the congregation there consisted of ten or twelve individuals, and was apparently on the point of dissolution. But we are glad to be able to inform our readers, that, now, Mr. Martin, the minister at Marshfield, seldom preaches to less than a hundred; and on Sunday evenings, to between two and three hundred. The Sunday-school contains about sixty children, and in the Monday evening-school, there are nearly fifty children, besides young men and women. These schools, together with a fellowship-fund and library, have all been instituted under the guardianship of the Association. Nailsworth, another station in the same interesting district, promises success as great, if not greater, at no distant period. It became an object of attention some months after Marshfield. Last spring, the Rev. R. Wright, late Unitarian Missionary, advised the friends

there, to form themselves regularly into a congregation; and we are informed, they have already established a fellowship-fund, and are laying the foundation for a library. We shall be obliged by further particulars, respecting this and other districts in the West.

The Lancashire and Cheshire Unitarian Missionary Society have engaged the services of the Rev. W. Buckland, as their permanent missionary. The annual meeting of the Society will be held on the day called Good Friday, April 13, in the Unitarian Chapel, Mosley-Str. Manchester. The Rev. J. R. Beard will preach on the occasion.

The Somerset, Gloucester, and Wilts Unitarian Missionary Association will hold their meeting at Marshfield, on what is commonly called Good Friday, April 13.

The Rev. R. Shawcross, late of Lincoln, has accepted an invitation from the Congregation of Unitarian Christians, Whitchurch, Salop.

The Rev. Richard Wright, late Unitarian Missionary, intends leaving Trowbridge, and to settle at Kirkstead in Lincolnshire.

The Rev. W. Turner, M. A. Mathematical Tutor in the Manchester College, York, has resigned his situation, but has kindly engaged to discharge the duties of the office till a suitable successor is appointed.

The Rev. Joseph Ketley of Manchester College, York, has accepted a unanimous invitation from the society of Unitarians at Hull, to undertake the pastoral charge amongst them.

The Unitarian Ministers of Sheffield and its neighbourhood, the Revds. Dr. Philipps, Piper, Wright, Brettel, and Wallace, have been delivering a course of Sabbath evening lectures in the Chapel at Sheffield, during the winter, on various important doctrinal and practical subjects.

Catholic Emancipation.—This measure of justice and of right has again been denied to our brethren. Nay, even the "*expediency* of taking into *consideration* the laws inflicting penalties" on the belief of so large a proportion of our fellow Christians, has been scouted by a majority of the House of Commons. We are glad to observe, however, that a majority both of Irish and Scotch Members voted in favour of this righteous object. We are sorry, that Great Britain should thus maintain her station among the intolerant nations of the earth, and be classed with Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Italy, Portugal, and Spain, in her practical ignorance of the true principles of civil and religious freedom. We grieve, as inhabitants of this country, that Great Britain should be outstripped in liberality and justice, and pure Christian philanthropy, by the United States of America, Saxony, Wurtemburgh, Bavaria, the Netherlands, France, Prussia, Austria, and even Russia; in which countries, no man is excluded from civil and military employments on account of his sect or religion: and we regret exceedingly, that that which is deemed right in Hanover, should be conceived wrong in Ireland and England. But we rejoice, as citizens of the world—as Christians, that so many nations have already seen the folly and injustice of stamping the brand of alien from the commonwealth, on any individual, because of his supposed errors of opinion. It is a pledge, we trust, that the intolerant nations will, at no distant period, also thus "awake to righteousness, and sin not" against the rights of the children of the same common, and beneficent, and impartial Father.

Nor is it our Catholic brethren alone, who are thus mentally steeped "in the gall of bitterness," and bound "in the bond of iniquity." The case is well stated in the admirable pamphlet, "Remarks on the Consumption of Public Wealth by the Clergy," &c. "No man enjoys all the rights and privileges of a citizen in England and Ireland, unless he be of the *Church of England!* More than two-thirds of the people are suffering under this intolerance, being members of other sects. The corporations and the universities, are shut against them, and the public offices of emolument nearly so. Besides these privations, in common with others, the hearers of the Roman Catholic Church, who are full one-fourth of the population, are excluded both houses of Parliament. This is effected

by means of an anathema or oath of abuse and condemnation, which all the members take; by which they swear that those points of religion are heretical and damnable, which are professed and venerated as sacred by 5,800,000 of the subjects of England, and by 160 millions of her allies, including 2 emperors and 7 kings. Other intolerant nations are content with the candidate for office professing himself of the established religion; this gratuitous curse upon the religion of others, is said to be without parallel. The intolerance of England is the greatest oppression now exhibited by nominal Christianity. It oppresses two-thirds of the whole population with considerable severity, in order to create a monopoly of riches and of learning for the other third; and upon one-fourth of the population it exercises a double portion of oppression. The practical result of the latter is, the most abject helotism, attended with perpetual insurrection and expensive military establishments, and pregnant with future danger to the empire, from the geographical position of the suffering parties."

The great evil, in truth, is the Established Church. The exaltation of one religious sect, by the depression and spoliation of others, is to degrade Christianity into the mere minion of authority—is to lay traps for weak consciences—and to convert the pure religion of the Saviour, into an Ishmael of opposition to man's privileges and human improvement. The inconsistency, too, of the Church of England persecuting the members of the Church of Rome, is great indeed. Mr. Brougham well observed, in the late debate, that, "If he were a Catholic arguing with a Protestant about religion, and the latter was rating him about indulgences, he would pluck out for him a few passages from our Athanasian creed—passages which he would not say, would have enabled him to excite a laugh against the Protestant religion, but which were opposed to common sense, to common arithmetic, and to Christian charity." Yes, and Mr. Brougham might have gone further still, and have shown most clearly, on Royal authority too, that the Common Prayer was only the Mass-Book done into English—that the creeds and ordinances were very similar—that even absolution for crime was the common stigma of both the Churches—that the main distinction between the rivals was, that one is infallible and the other always in the right,—and, had he been fond of proverbs, he might have summed up the matter in that most expressive one, "As is the Mother, so is her Daughter."

Punishment of Death.—We were much gratified in observing, that, at the last Old Bailey Sessions in London, Mr. Marillier and Mr. Smallfield, both, we believe, Christian Unitarians—the latter individual certainly—objected to taking the juror's oath, on the ground that, in the event of a case occurring, to which the penalty of death was attached, except for murder, they could not conscientiously bring in a verdict of guilty. We rejoice that this practical stand against a punishment, at variance, as we think, with the whole spirit of Christianity, has thus been made. It is an able seconding of Mr. Peel's efforts to amend the criminal laws of this country; and his efforts richly merit the approbation of all, who have at heart, not merely the punishment of crime, but its repression, by the reformation of the criminal.

In our October Number, we noticed the various English periodical publications, devoted to free inquiry, and the upholding of the Unity of the Supreme Being. We have now great pleasure in directing the attention of our readers to American works conducted with similar objects,—the Christian Examiner, published in Boston, Massachusets, every two months; the Christian Inquirer, weekly, at New-York; and the Christian Register, a weekly newspaper, at Boston. There are many others, we understand; but these are all that have yet come under our notice. We have made arrangements for a regular supply of these interesting and well-conducted works; and shall, from time to time, present our readers with extracts from them. Our present and past Numbers will prove our obligations in this respect already.

It is a pleasing circumstance, when those who have laboured long, and ardently, and faithfully, in the cause of human improvement, and of pure and undefiled religion, are enabled to leave a record of their pulpit ministrations, to excite and animate others to zealous efforts for God's truth and man's happiness and salvation. There is a delightful satisfaction in perusing the addresses, which have received their last finish from the hand, which may, in no long time, be stilled in death; and wisdom's warning voice comes with double force, when its utterer is on the confines of an eternal world. Those of our readers who have not yet perused the volume of sermons by our venerable friend, the Rev. T. Belsham, have an ample source of

gratification and instruction in store for them; and they, with those who have enjoyed that pleasure, will rejoice, that it is to be increased, as another volume, we understand, is in the press, and will speedily appear.

Edinburgh Continental Society.—We understand that a meeting of this institution was held in the Assembly-Rooms, George-Street, Edinburgh, on Wednesday the 21st March. The Report was read, we believe, by Mr. Robert Haldane. The Rev. W. J. Bakewell, the Minister of the Unitarian Chapel in Edinburgh, then attempted to address the meeting, but was informed by the Chairman, that he could not be heard till the close of the proceedings of the day. When the business of the meeting was concluded, Mr. Bakewell was very politely called on by the Chairman, to go forward to the platform, when any remarks he had to offer would be heard. Mr. Bakewell then, as we learn, stated his views on the subject of propagating Calvinism on the Continent of Europe—affirmed that he had never heard such illiberality manifested any where, as in the speeches which had been delivered in that meeting—nor such palpable mis-statements of facts, adduced to excite unhallowed zeal,—that, if they were in want of objects on which to exercise their philanthropy, they needed only to go to Glasgow, and the West of Scotland generally, where they would find numbers destitute even of sufficient food; and they would be much better employed, in thus clothing the naked, and feeding the hungry, than in expending money to carry the Gospel to those who did not require it, as they were already its possessors, and in a much purer form than they could impart it. Mr. Bakewell was listened to, we hear, with great attention and occasional approbation, with the exception of a little disturbance in the early part of his speech, but which was immediately silenced by the Chairman, who said that the true and real state of religion on the Continent, was what they should all be desirous of ascertaining. Can it be true, that Mr. Haldane expressed his astonishment, that a person holding Mr. Bakewell's sentiments, should be allowed to tread the hallowed ground on which stood the servants of God? We hope, for Mr. Haldane's own sake, that of such bigotry he would be ashamed. We shall be glad to be furnished with further particulars of this meeting.

THE

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On the Language of Scripture.

THE Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of the Unitarians. We receive it as the rule of our faith, and the guide of our conduct. Our opponents uncharitably accuse us of slighting, mutilating, and wresting the Scriptures. But those who are acquainted with our principles, acknowledge, that we reverence the Sacred Records, diligently study them, and endeavour to substantiate our doctrines by the words of Christ and his Apostles. Some of our doctrinal opponents have had the candour to discern, and the fortitude to avow, the fair and dispassionate manner in which Unitarians conduct their part of the controversy. "I must own," observes the pious Archbishop Tillotson, "that generally, the Unitarians are a pattern of the fair way of disputing, and of debating matters of religion without heat and unseemly reflections upon their adversaries. They generally argue matters with that temper and gravity, and with that freedom from passion and transport, which becomes a serious and weighty argument: and for the most part, they agree clearly and closely, with extraordinary guard and caution, with great dexterity and decency, and yet with smartness and subtilty enough; with a very gentle heat and few hard words." (Yates's Vindication of Unitarianism exemplifies the truth of these candid remarks.)

We are called in scorn, rational Christians. We do not object to the appellation. Reason is the distinguishing prerogative of man. The Scriptures exhort us freely to exercise our understanding. Reason enables us to judge of the truth of the revelations which God has made by Moses, the Prophets, Jesus, and the Apostles; and reason guides our interpretation of the language of Scripture. By its friendly aid, difficulties disappear, obscurities are cleared, apparent contradictions are reconciled, and order, consistency, and harmony are manifested.

We preface the remarks we intend to make on the language of Scripture, with the following rules, or maxims of

interpretation. 1st, *God cannot have revealed in the Scriptures any doctrine which contradicts the dictates of reason.*—God speaks to rational beings. We are called upon to judge what he says. "Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" Luke xii. 57. Protestants make this irresistible appeal in their controversy with the Roman Catholics, and then firmly withstand their obstinate reference to the words of Christ in support of the doctrine of transubstantiation. But Trinitarian Protestants in their arguments with Unitarians, desert the principle which gives them so much advantage over the Catholic. They throw down their impenetrable armour, shift their ground, and take the soft and slippery station which the Catholics occupy. The argument which they use against transubstantiation, that every man has as great evidence that transubstantiation is false, as any man can pretend to have that God hath revealed any doctrine so irrational; and that no argument is sufficient to prove a doctrine or revelation to be from God, which is not clearer and stronger than the difficulties and objections against it, is denominated carnal reasoning in their defence of the contradictory doctrine of the Trinity—a doctrine which human creeds have explicitly declared, but of which the Scriptures have certainly not given any clear revelation. It is a doctrine derived from heathen philosophy, and supported from Scripture only by far-fetched inferences.

2d, *All obscure, difficult, and figurative passages ought to be interpreted by those which are plain and easy to be understood.*—In writings of great antiquity, the language of which has ceased to be spoken, many obscurities may be expected, arising from false readings, peculiar idioms, phrases, figures, allusions, &c. Great attention must be paid to the design and connection. This is more especially necessary in the Epistles, the common divisions of which into chapters and verses, ought to be disregarded. "But if a Bible was printed as it should be," observes Locke, "I doubt not but several parties would complain of it as an innovation, and a dangerous change in the publishing of those holy books. And indeed, those who are for maintaining their opinions, and the systems of parties by sound of words, with a neglect of the true sense of Scripture, would have reason to make and foment the outcry. They would most of them be immediately disarmed of their great magazine of artillery, wherewith they defend

themselves, and fall upon others, if the Holy Scriptures were but laid before the eyes of Christians in its due connection and consistency, it would not then be so easy to snatch out a few words, as if they were separate from the rest, to serve a purpose to which they did not at all belong, and with which they have nothing to do. But as the matter now stands, he that has a mind to it, may, at a cheap rate, be a notable champion for truth, that is, for the doctrines of the sect that chance or interest has cast him into. He need but be furnished with verses of Sacred Scripture, containing words and expressions that are but flexible (as all general, obscure, and doubtful ones are), and his system that has appropriated them to the orthodoxy of his church, makes them immediately strong and irrefragable arguments for his opinion. This is the benefit of loose sentences, and Scripture crumbled into verses, which quickly turn into independent aphorisms. But if the quotation in the verse produced, were considered as a part of a continued coherent discourse, and so its sense were limited by the tenor of the context, most of these forward and warm disputants would be quite stripped of those, which they doubt not now to call spiritual weapons, and they would have often nothing to say that would not show their weakness, and manifestly fly in their faces. Perhaps if it were well examined, it would be no very extraordinary paradox to say, *that there are fewer that bring their opinions to the Sacred Scripture to be tried by that infallible rule, than bring the Sacred Scripture to their opinions, to bend it to them, to make it as they can a cover and guard to them.*"*

3d, *The general tenor of Scripture ought to be made the rule of our faith and practice.*—A little attention, with the aid of common sense, will enable us to discern the principal doctrines and duties of Revelation. From the general tenor of Scripture, we deduce the unity, the supremacy, the providence, and benevolence of God, the responsibility of man, the dependance of his future happiness or misery on his use or abuse of the talents entrusted to his care. Any doctrine opposed to these grand, these fundamental principles, cannot be a doctrine of Revelation. Thus, the doctrine of the Trinity is irreconcilable

* Locke's Essay for understanding St. Paul's Epistles, by consulting St. Paul himself. We strongly recommend the whole of this preface to his Paraphrase, to the serious study of our readers.

with the Unity of God, and cannot be a doctrine of Revelation. The doctrine of eternal torments, is opposed to the benevolence of God, and cannot be a doctrine of Scripture. The passages that seem to inculcate these notions, and others opposed to the attributes of the Deity, as derived from the general tenor of Scripture, are either misinterpreted, or are spurious, or contain some false reading. Misinterpretation may arise from giving a literal sense to a figurative passage, from ignorance of the idiom and structure of the language, from an ellipsis not being supplied, and various other causes.

4th, *Great attention must be paid to the signification of words in controverted passages.*—Parallel passages should be carefully examined. We should endeavour to ascertain the different senses in which any important word is used in Scripture, and especially the usual acceptation of it by the author whose work we are reading. The word God is used by *us* only to signify the Deity, but in Scripture, it has a very extensive signification. One of the names of the Supreme Being is often used to denote strength, quality, excellence, &c. Gen. xxiii. 6, נשיא אלהים, *neshia aleim*, literally, a prince of God, *i.e.* a mighty prince. Hosea xiii. 15, רוח יהוה, *ruch yeve*, a wind of Jehovah, *i. e.* a strong wind. 2 Sam. ix. 3, חסד אלהים, *hesed aleim*, the kindness of God, *i. e.* great kindness. A great fire is called a fire of God, Job i. 16. Great mountains are called mountains of God, Psalm xxxvi. 6; and lofty cedars, cedars of Jehovah. The same idiom occurs in the New Testament. Acts vii. 20, Moses was *αστεῖος τω Θεω*, *asteios to Theo*, beautiful to God, *i. e.* very beautiful. 2 Cor. *ὁπλα δυναπα Θεω*, *hopla dunata Theo*, weapons powerful to God, *i. e.* very powerful. Rom. i. 16, The power of God, *i. e.* very powerful. 1 Thess. iv. 16, The trumpet of God, a trumpet of a loud blast. Persons speaking the word of God, fulfilling his purposes, or executing important trusts, are called gods. Ex. xxii. 28, Thou shalt not revile the judges: in the original, the gods. Judges and magistrates are also called אלהים, *aleim*, gods, in the following passages:—Ex. xxi. 6, Then shall his master bring him to the judges, literally, to God; Ex. xxii. 8; 1 Sam. ii. 25; Psalm lxxxii. 1. 6. Ex. vii. 1, And Jehovah said unto Moses, See, I have made thee אלהים, *aleim*, god to Pharaoh. See also John x. 34, 35; 1 Cor. viii. 5. Son of

God is a common mode of expression to intimate a state of favour and privilege, of excellence and acceptance. Can we wonder that Jesus Christ, who was without sin, who spake the words of God, and was in the place of God to us, whilst he revealed his will, should be called God, or a God, by the Apostle John i. 1? Yet this is the only passage in which Christ is so named. We shall hereafter show, that the following passages do not speak of Christ as God:—Acts xx. 28; Rom. ix. 5; 1 Tim. iii. 16; Hebrews i. 8; 1 John v. 20.

(To be continued.)

To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.

Sir,

Unitarianism affords such numerous and splendid examples of conversion from theological mysteries, and palpable contradictions, to her plain and heavenly tenets, that it is probably this simple fact, which prompts the champions of orthodoxy to be so lavish of slander and vituperation; thus endeavouring, by the most dishonourable means, to neutralize the dreaded effects which might result from free inquiry; and, by every species of misrepresentation, to prevent the people from reading, thinking, and concluding for themselves. Judging from its consequences, therefore, the fact is highly important; it affords a strong antecedent probability, that Unitarianism is Gospel truth; and this will be more evident by investigating its origin.

Unitarianism can boast of many advocates and defenders who rejected the corruptions of Christianity, and embraced what they conscientiously believed, after laborious and patient investigation, to be the truth as it is in Jesus. To what motive can we impute a line of conduct so diametrically opposed to all the influences usually ascribed to habit, education, or popular opinions? The cause must be allowed to be powerfully influential. Were these converts acquired by means of some fictitious plausibility with which it was invested; of immunities it had the means of granting, or penalties it possessed the power of inflicting? Have any been led to embrace Unitarianism, because of the incessant importunity, the never-ceasing attacks of its professors; who zealously disseminated their opinions by every method possible—clothed it with familiar prepossessing graces—and concealed its hideous deformity beneath an insidious cloak of candour and lib-

erality, until the unsuspecting heart imbibed the fatal poison, and the hapless victim fell a powerless sacrifice? This cannot be; because, the charge has been gravely advanced, that Unitarians are torpid and inert, inhabitants of a frigid and cheerless region; without zeal; not deeming it necessary to make the least effort to propagate their peculiar views. This charge, too, especially when compared with the heaven-and-earth-moving proselytism of some sects, is in some respects correct, with reference to time *past*—nay, is partially true of time *present*. That it is not universally true *now*, may be gathered from the alarm so apparent in the tents of orthodoxy, at the unseemly activity which is so unaccountably manifested. Verily, it was unwise to charge upon the system, the indifference of its professors; to denounce Unitarianism as necessarily productive of disgraceful supineness and inactivity; to taunt it as a sect almost extinct, and "nearly dwindled away from public observation!" Thus, Unitarians have been forced to the field; they have buckled on their armour; they have appealed from the authority of Fathers, and the tenets of Reformers, and the Catechisms of Assemblies, to the Bible, as the only law binding upon Christians; they have proclaimed the inalienable right of man to think for himself, in religious things: that no man has power to interfere between man and his Creator, but that "conscience is not controlable by human laws, nor amenable to human tribunals." And the sons of orthodoxy may quail before the spirit they have so unguardedly contributed to raise, whilst from Indus to the Pole, the holy truth is published, that there is ONE GOD, and one Mediator between God and men, the MAN CHRIST JESUS.

But to return. As Unitarians have been so inactive in the dissemination of their opinions, we cannot ascribe to their agency, that vast accession of numbers, that acquisition of talent and zeal, which has been gained from the ranks of orthodoxy. Is the cause to be found in the ecclesiastical dignities which Unitarianism can bestow? Does she lavish honours on hypocrites who profess her dogmas, and reward her advocates with enormous wealth; and entice conscience with golden salvos; and hoodwink inpendence by splendid endowments? Or, as an established faith, does she wield secular authority, and create objects and stations, which may be worthy the exertion of ambition, or lure the attention of avarice? Or, if the influence

of patronage and wealth be nugatory, can she shackle free inquiry by *ex animo* assents and consents to creeds, articles, and confessions, or command uniformity by the agency of intolerant tests, or disqualifying laws? No! she is herself proscribed and debased; she possesses no immunities; wealth she has not to bestow, nor honours to confer, for she has not sacrificed to the prince of this world. Nor does she possess influence, by assuming the infallibility of an Assembly's Catechism, and erecting herself thereon as an immoveable basis; and alluring frail humanity with captivating views of seats at synods and presbyteries, and, in the distance a Moderator's chair, from whence to rule, as with a rod of iron, the faith and opinions of fellow men—arrogate the powers of God's vicegerent, the head and master of the Christian church, and promulgate what shall, or shall not, be believed—what is, or is not essential to salvation. Unitarianism receives, as a fundamental truth, the Christian equality of all the disciples of their Master. She recognises not lords in God's heritage. Who art thou that judgest another's servant, to his own Master he standeth or falleth?

Is it vanity or self-conceit, which has contributed to swell the ranks of this rapidly increasing sect? Was the profession of Unitarianism synonymous with profound erudition, and brilliant talents; did it combine in the eyes of the world, literary celebrity with distinguished excellence; was it connected with acknowledged worth, superior attainments, and splendid accomplishments? And were the opinions of her advocates received with respectful deference; and the character held in such estimation, as to empower its possessor to become an indisputable arbiter in all things pertaining to philosophy or literature? On the contrary, the sect was despised as insignificant; its tenets scouted as heterodox; its teachers vilified as ignorant declaimers: while from the paucity of its numbers, each theologically orthodox stripling could pour upon it the language of contempt, for it was the sect every where spoken against!

Still Unitarianism was on the increase; her cause was strengthened by the accession of many, whose first introduction to Christianity took place under very different auspices from hers. To her, as the pure Gospel light, flocked fearless and independent minds, who, in the pursuit of truth, were led to reject Platonic reveries, and

scholastic philosophy; who could not amalgamate mystery with revelation, or palpable contradictions with evident truths; and leaving these, left also those temporal but important matters, which are to many, the whole of religion. They left with equal indifference, the splendid episcopate or humbler kirk; and rejected the control of priestly presbyterianism, as well as the pride of pompous prelacy.

How is it, that so many bright and master-spirits have embraced Unitarianism, though thereby sacrificing all apparent means of existence, and forsaking honour and affluence, for trial and suffering; though feelingly aware that obloquy and persecution must be their portion; though their names were cast out as evil, and themselves shunned as walking pestilences; though the heart and the affections were severely lacerated by the rude snapping of the endearing ties of friendship and kindred; and though they became as aliens in society, and all the bonds which united man to his species, were apparently sundered for ever? What cause can be found sufficiently strong, to produce such results, adequate to such fearful consequences? What the motive to which such actions are legitimately attributable? What! but that Unitarianism is the truth of Heaven; and was embraced as such by men, who respected that truth for its own sake; who held their consciences sacred, and believed it to be their incumbent duty, to avow the result of their sincere investigations, regardless of the consequences. And who, therefore, embraced Unitarianism, though neglected and despised by the world; who shunned it not, though its portion was bitter adversity. And they shall have their reward. When the Saviour shall collect his followers from the north and the south, from the east and from the west, then shall these good men, made perfect, be received by him, because they bore their sincere testimony amidst sufferings, anguish, and tribulation, inasmuch as during their earthly pilgrimage, they were not ashamed of a crucified Messiah, nor of his words.

Is it not, then, an antecedent probability of the truth of Christian Unitarianism—that, rejecting preferment, popularity, and wealth, for poverty, obloquy, and reproach, Priestley, Jebb, Lindsey, Wakefield, and numberless other worthies of the same unbending integrity and unshaken firmness, enrolled themselves as her defenders? Do not those doctrines deserve an impartial consideration, which were believed to be the truth by Newton, Locke,

Lardner, and Milton? Ought that system to be lightly neglected, which can produce instances of conversion from orthodox tenets, simply by a diligent study of the Scriptures?* which can point to an Hindoo Brahmin, as raised up by Providence, to promulgate the fundamental truth of the Divine Unity, in regions of polytheistical idolatry; and to be supported by an indefatigable coadjutor, converted from a Trinitarian Missionary to a Unitarian advocate? And lastly, can that faith be treated with indifference—will it not, does it not, command and obtain even unwilling attention, by its onward march, its gradual progression, its increasing strength? The trophies it possesses, the laurels it has already won, may be found by referring to those numbers of conscientious, and talented, and educated men, who were nursed in orthodoxy, and imbued with the perversions and corruptions of Christianity, so commonly mistaken for the true system of the well-beloved Son of God; but who, abjuring their errors, avow themselves Unitarians, and advocate the glad tidings of the blessed gospel, the Unity of the Godhead; the Messiahship of Jesus, the Christ, the man of Nazareth; and the free unpurchased grace of a God of love.

Let the champions of orthodoxy produce equal testimonials to the truth of their creed, before they triumph in assumed victory. And let them not boast when buckling on their armour, as if they were putting it off.

D.

On Education.—No. 1.

Education, in the abstract, is not less comprehensive than momentous; it being the medium by which man gains possession of all his experience, from the first to the last moment of his existence. In general, however, the term is limited to that early period of life, when certain branches of knowledge are by various methods made familiar to youth, and a stock of associations and ideas thereby acquired.

Taking education in this limited sense, that only can be correct, which is adapted to the probable future situation of the individual; which, viewing the duties which he will be hereafter called upon to fulfil as the *end*, selects as the

* See, The Rise and Progress of the Unitarian Doctrine, at Rochdale, Newchurch, and other places, by John Ashworth. Also, Eaton's History of the York Baptists.

means, all that will be conducive to his usefulness generally, and add to his comfort and happiness particularly.

And it is highly gratifying to observe the correct views which are gradually pervading society, on this important subject. A high authority, indeed, asserts it to be "every where among enlightened men, a subject of the deepest complaint, that the business of education is ill performed; and that, in this, which might have been supposed the most interesting of all human concerns, the practical proceedings are far from corresponding with the progress of the human mind. It may be remarked, that, notwithstanding all that has been written on the subject, even the *theory* of education has not kept pace with philosophy; and it is unhappily true, that the *practice* remains to a prodigious distance behind the theory."* Still an amazing revolution in the opinions of the thinking part of the community, is so apparent as to be undeniable, and the change, judging from present appearances, will in time be general through all classes. The wonder is, that an object confessedly so important, with regard to the real welfare of man, has not long ago received that investigation which it so richly merits; and previously gained that attention, which the friends of the human race are now affording it. It has been too long left to the uncontrolled guidance of system-mongers and pedants, proverbial for the pertinacity with which they cling to misty perplexing rules and abstruse systems, those erudite monuments of the wisdom of our ancestors, whose questionable utility is lost in the venerable antiquity of their origin. Education is, or was, metamorphosed into a kind of Shibboleth, to be pronounced after the fashion of bygone centuries; any attempt to modernise whose phraseology, is a crime unpardonable; but to endeavour to emancipate the minds of the rising generation from its unhallowed thraldom, a deed subversive of all moral culture and wholesome discipline! Hence but little real improvement could rationally be expected from, or was really achieved by, those who, *a priori*, might be supposed from their intimate connection with the subject, to be the first to remedy its defects, supply its deficiences, and increase its benefits.

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* Essays, &c. by *James Mills, Esq.* In one of which, on Education, the author defines its object to be, the production of the greatest possible sum of human happiness; and that, to be properly directed, it should encourage, fix, and promote those associations of ideas which lead to that result, and weaken or destroy the contrary.

These trammels are gradually diminishing; and are rarely to be found in their ancient oppressiveness, save, perhaps, in universities, collegiate schools, and endowed foundations of somewhat the same monkish aspects. The fact is, mankind are becoming wiser. For the general intercourses of, and duties due to, society, it is discovered, that much of the best part of life, that which is susceptible of the most vivid and lasting impressions (an invaluable combination) is absolutely squandered away; that the acquisition of dead languages are of little use in after life; and that an acquaintance (in the original) with the disgusting intrigues of heathen deities, is a no very enviable accomplishment. It is discovered, that if aught of good can be extracted from the customs, manners, and opinions of Greece and Rome, that good may be obtained by an immense proportion whose time is now worthlessly consumed; and at a far less expense, too, by consulting translations.*

If, indeed, Greece and Rome were models of perfection in moral and physical science; if nothing could be added to their knowledge; no improvement effected; and if their authors could not be translated into plain English; some plausibility would attach to the system, which requires all youth to become acquainted with the classics, ere they can claim to be considered *educated.* But this is not the case. Knowledge adapted to a mixed estate, and limited monarchy, like that of Britain, cannot be plentifully gathered from the records of a turbulent democracy, or the deeds of imperial tyranny. The gross licentiousness of the ancients, is certainly not a fit school in which to study morality; nor the excesses of heathen sacrifices, and the latitude granted by its innumerable festivals, a proper basis on which to found a knowledge of the attributes of Deity, or the precepts of Christianity.†

* This statement receives a practical illustration, in the falling off in the number of scholars, at the Grammar School of this City. It is now seen to be necessary, in order to keep up its standing, that the boys should be taught something else than mere Latin and Greek. We wish well to the propositions lately submitted to the Committee of that Institution by its Convener, though, we think, the plan should be even yet more extended.—*Ed.*

† It is well deserving the consideration of the friends of Scriptural truth, whether this sort of preparatory study, may not be one cause of the continuance of superstitious ideas in religion? The mind early imbued with the ideas of the incarnations and metamorphoses of the gods of Greece and Rome, almost unconsciously falls in with prevalent miscalled Christian opinions of a similar kind; or, at any rate, feels not that moral shuddering at such heathen conceptions, which the *uneducated* mind will naturally experience.—*Ed.*

Where, then, is the real benefit, which is afforded by an acquaintance with the dead languages? A more correct knowledge of English is not thereby acquired, than may be gained by other methods. The most profound linguists have occasionally afforded lamentable examples of ungrammatical composition in their mother tongue; and the great Lexicographer himself, might have learned from the "Diversions of Purley," that a knowledge of the Saxon, is as essential to the English philologer, as the much lauded dead languages. Do these subjects possess such unparelleled perfection, by teaching to think? They may do so to a certain extent; but low, indeed, are the materials of thought, if they can only be supplied from grammars and lexicons; if analysis and induction can only be correctly attainable, by studying the inflections of verbs, the composition of sentences, the idioms, and rationale of even learned languages. The absurdity of such conclusions is apparent. The accomplishments of (British) literature; the discoveries of science; the arcana of the arts; the innumerable varieties of general information, need not be cast aside as utterly worthless, for they likewise afford materials for thought, and which arising from combined ideas of *things*, will be of far greater utility, than can result from that thought which arises merely from combinations of arbitrary *signs*.

It is, indeed, asserted, that the acquisition of the learned languages, (*learned!*) are "useful means for the purposes of culture and discipline;" and that some species of severe study must be assumed, for the purpose of acquiring those habits of attention and industry, which are essential to education. In other words, that the learned languages, which require both *study* and *attention*, are the "rudiments of sound education." This is an unqualified assumption; and if the definition of education, at the commencement of this article, be correct, it is false. We shall in time recognise as *learned* men, individuals not versed in what are called the learned languages; nor will those be necessary rudiments of a sound education. We are discovering, that it is possible for a man to *think*, though no Latinist; to obtain a thorough knowledge of natural philosophy, or political economy, without being a Grecian; and able to gain a respectable acquaintance with polite literature, although so pitiably ignorant, as not to know the difference between Arabic and Hebrew.

(To be Continued.) ZACCHEUS.

The Reformation commemorated and improved.

(From a Selection of Hymns for Unitarian Worship, by the Rev. R. Wallace of Chesterfield.—Hunter, London.)

How long, tyrannic Rome,
Did Britain bear thy yoke!
How long, within the lofty dome,
Thy burning incense smoke!

But when the free-born mind
By nobler views was led,
Fast as the chaff before the wind
Thy dark dominion fled.

And soon thy dismal shade
From Britain disappear'd,
When truth, in brightest charms array'd,
Her lofty standard rear'd.

How happy, had her light
Reach'd every slavish mind,
Nor left one lingering cloud of night,
One lasting stain behind!

Christians! 'tis yours to end
What thus your sires began;
With all your efforts to extend
The great, the godlike plan.

You feel its peerless worth;
Then make its blessings known:
Nor cease till all the sons of earth,
One God, one Master own.

Unitarian Worthies.—No. 1, *Thomas Firmin.*

(Concluded from page 280.)

When, in the years 1681 and 1682, great numbers of French Protestants fled into England, in order to escape the persecutions of Louis XIV., Mr. Firmin hastened to provide for the relief of those sufferers for conscience' sake; and on that occasion, as well as after the revocation of the edict of Nantes in 1685, many thousand pounds were entrusted to his management, on account of the refugees. For them, also, he established a linen manufacture at Ipswich. In the year 1689, vast inroads of the Irish nation, comprising persons of all ranks, fled to England,

from the persecutions and proscriptions of James II. Again was Mr. Firmin active and indefatigable in his benevolence. He had the pleasure to see his exertions on their behalf, crowned with success. And when, chiefly through him, fifty-six thousand pounds were raised, he attended to the distribution of this sum with such diligence, faithfulness, and impartiality, that the Archbishop of Tuam, and some Irish bishops, united in sending him a letter, in which they expressed their grateful sense of his kindness and exertions on behalf of their countrymen. He laboured with incredible zeal and activity, in releasing poor debtors from prison—"the release of one man out of prison," he was wont to say, "is a relief bestowed on his whole family." The lot of others whom he was unable to release, he amended. These efforts he continued to his last breath; and, both in reference to this matter and to many others, had so much influence in the House of Commons, as to advance by the Acts of that body, his holy purposes of benevolence. In a variety of other ways, did this most excellent citizen exert himself for the good of man. He assisted by small loans, young and worthy tradesmen; he promoted the wishes of youths, anxious to procure extensive knowledge, yet possessed of inadequate means. Poor ministers, irrespectively of their opinions, he took a peculiar pleasure in aiding. For "young hopeful preachers and scholars," also, "candidates for lectures, schools, cures, or rectories, he would solicit with as much affection and diligence, as other men do for their sons and near relations." But we have not time to detail all that Mr. Firmin did to benefit mankind. The confidence that was reposed in him, by charitable persons, was unlimited; and the funds that he had, in consequence, at his disposal, are truly astonishing. In every imaginable way was his benevolence evinced. Nor was it less usefully employed, when he was invited (as he was frequently) to arbitrate differences. "I have heard," says his biographer, "his physician blame him sometimes, that he did not allow himself competent time for his meals, but hastened away to his affairs. But those affairs were seldom or ever his own; he was to solicit for the poor, or in the business of some friend, who wanted Mr. Firmin's interest, or he was to meet on some design relating to the public good. In these matters, his friends that were not quick in their despatches, had reason oftentimes to complain of him, as not giving them suffi-

cient time to despatch business with him, for he was active above most men in apprehension, in speech, judgment, resolution, and action." Nor was his charity limited to any sect. He could even assist the persecutor. King Charles granted a brief for the Polonian Protestants, who had assisted in banishing the Polonian Unitarians. And in this case also, Mr. Firmin exerted himself to the utmost, in order to forward the object. And withal, his charity was most unobtrusive. He did not destroy the acceptableness of the gift by the manner of bestowing it, or by after recollections and intimations of obligation to those whom he had benefited. In many cases, our Saviour's words receive a verification very different from what he intended, and "it is more blessed to give than to receive," is bitterly felt by those, who, in a multiplicity of ways, are often reminded that they have once "received." Not so with Mr. Firmin. What he gave, he gave, and there was an end of it. He had done his duty, and gratified his heart; he blessed God for the opportunity, and never dreamed of obligation.

Such a man could not fail to be an ardent friend to civil and religious liberty. If any man was unjustly oppressed, Mr. Firmin was ready to help him; and those who suffered for vindicating the rights of Englishmen, ever found succour with him. He distributed publications in behalf of public freedom, in order to arouse the people to a just opposition to the tyranny of James II.; and so far as his situation would admit, was a zealous promoter of the glorious Revolution.

So generally known was the excellence of Mr. Firmin's character, that it attracted the notice of Queen Mary. Her majesty also heard that he was a Unitarian, and charged Tillotson to rectify his errors. Tillotson replied, that he had often essayed in vain; a controversy, however, ensued, which furnished another of the *few* proofs, alas! that religious disputes may be carried on in the spirit of religion. His friends were of all classes, and all countries, and all creeds. Amongst English orthodox divines, with whom he entertained the greatest familiarity, we may mention Dr. Outram, Dr. Whichcot, Dr. Worthington, Bishop Wilkins, the Bishop of Gloucester, the Archbishop of Canterbury. And so great was the confidence that Tillotson reposed in him, that when absent from London, he devolved on Mr. Firmin the duty of providing preachers

for the Tuesday's lecture at St. Lawrence, which was frequented by all the divines of the town, and by a great many persons of quality and distinction. "See here," to use the language of his biographer, "a trader, who knew no Latin or Greek, no logic or philosophy, compassed about by an incredible number of learned friends, who differed widely in opinion from him, and were continually attacking him for his supposed errors; yet could they never remove him from the belief of the unity of God, nor did their importunities or his resistance break off, or so much as lessen the friendship between them." What a delightful idea does this suggest, of the spirit of Mr. Firmin and that of his friends. If this spirit in Wilkins, in Outram, in Tillotson, was orthodox, what is the spirit of those who profess, in our days, to hold the same opinions?

This excellent Christian died in 1697, in the 66th year of his age. Whilst on his bed of death, he was visited "by his most dear friend, the Bishop of Gloucester." Mr. Firmin told the bishop, "he was now going;" and "I hope," said he, "God will not condemn me to worse company, than I have loved and used in the present life." The bishop replied—"that he had been an extraordinary example of charity; the poor had a wonderful blessing in you; I doubt not, these works will follow you, if you have no expectation from the merit of them, but rely on the infinite goodness of God." He answered, "I do so," "and I say in the words of my Saviour, when I have done all, I am but an unprofitable servant." Thus ended the days of this servant of God. The best eulogium on his character is, the records of the deeds of his life. In perusing a narrative of what he did, the reader will best learn what he was. We shall only add, that he had unusual quickness of perception, was inquisitive and ingenious, and possessed of a great thirst for knowledge. He was naturally of a warm temper, and incapable of dissembling his sentiments. His piety was rational and fervent; and his life a continued display of the virtues inculcated by Christianity. The ideas of nobleness, generosity, influence, and authority, do not, in the minds of some, very readily associate with the notions of a shop-keeper; and yet Mr. Firmin was one of the finest examples of these united attributes. His virtues did not raise him out of his line of life; but they made him admirable in the discharge of its duties; and serve to prove a most flattering truth,—that

there is nothing in the practice or principles of commerce, even in its lower branches, which requires the sacrifice of conscience, or the contraction of habits of vulgarity; that there is nothing in it which unfits a man for the discharge of the highest functions of a citizen and a social being—which unfits him for the companionship of the great and good—which unfits him for the pursuit and maintenance of truths of the most useful and important kind. Nor did Mr. Firmin neglect his own concerns to attend to those of others. He joined the strictest attention to his business, with the most benevolent and enlightened projects for the benefit of the human race. He never neglected his customers, and yet he enjoyed the society and engaged the friendship of some of the greatest men of his time: whilst his hand and heart were active to do and to be good. He who wishes to accumulate as much of pure and sincere happiness in the brief space of life as is possible, may learn from Thomas Firmin, that the surest plan he can pursue, is the cultivation of a large benevolence. A more useful, a more active, a more happy, a more respectable life than his, was probably never led. Reader, such was Thomas Firmin—a Unitarian Christian. Go thou, and do likewise.

G. C. S.

Objections to Unitarian Christianity.

(Continued from page 269.)

We proceed to another objection, and one which probably weighs more with multitudes than any other. It is this, that our doctrine respecting Christ, *takes from the sinner the only ground of hope.* It is said continually by our opponents, "We and all men are sinners by our very nature, and infinitely guilty before God. The sword of divine justice hangs over us, and hell opens beneath us; and where shall we find a refuge but in an infinite Saviour? We want an *infinite atonement;* and in depriving us of this, you rob us of our hope, you tear from the Scriptures the only doctrine which meets our wants. We may burn our Bibles, if your interpretation be true, for our case is desperate; we are lost for ever." In such warm and wild language, altogether unwarranted by Scripture, yet exceedingly fitted to work on common and terror-stricken minds, our doctrine is constantly assailed.

Now to this declamation, for such we esteem it, we oppose one plain request. Show us, we say, a *single* passage in the Bible, in which we are told, that the sin of man is infinite, and needs an infinite atonement. We find *not one.* Not even a whisper of this doctrine comes to us from the sacred writers. Let us stop a moment and weigh this doctrine. It teaches us, that man, although created by God a frail, erring, and imperfect being, and even created with an irresistible propensity to sin, is yet regarded by his Creator as an *infinite offender*, meriting *infinite punishment* for his earliest transgressions; and that he is doomed to *endless torment*, unless an infinite Saviour appear for his rescue! And what man, we ask, has the courage to charge on our benevolent and righteous Parent, this merciless and iniquitous government of his creatures? Tell us not that Unitarianism cuts off the sinner's hope; for if God be what this system teaches, we see no hope for saint or sinner, for men or angels. Under such a Sovereign, every one's prospects grow black; every heart may well shudder. We maintain, that man is not created in a condition which makes an infinite atonement necessary; nor do we believe that any creature can fall into a condition, from which God may not deliver him, without this rigid expedient. Surely, if an infinite satisfaction to justice were indispensable to our salvation; if God took on him human nature, for the very purpose of offering it; and if this fact constitute the peculiar glory, the life and essence, and the saving efficacy of the gospel, we must find it expressed clearly, definitely, in at least one passage in the Bible. But not one, we repeat it, can be found there. We maintain, farther, that this doctrine, of God becoming a victim and sacrifice for his own rebellious subjects, is as irrational as it is unscriptural. We have always supposed that atonement, if necessary, was to be made *to*, not *by*, the Sovereign, who has been offended; and we cannot conceive a more unlikely method of vindicating his authority, than that he himself should bear the punishment which is due to transgressors of his laws. We have another objection. If an infinite atonement be necessary, and if, consequently, none but God can make it, we see not but that God must become a sufferer, must take upon himself our pain and woe; a thought from which a pious mind shrinks with horror. To escape this difficulty, we are told, that Christ suffered *as man, not as*

God; but if man only suffered, if only a human and finite mind suffered, if Christ, as God, was perfectly happy on the cross, and bore only a short and limited pain in his human nature, where, we ask, was the infinite atonement? Where is the boasted hope, which this doctrine is said to give to the sinner?

The objection, that there is no hope for the sinner, unless Christ be the infinite God, amazes us. Surely if we have a *Father in heaven, of infinite goodness and power,* we need *no other infinite person,* to save us. The common doctrine disparages and dishonours the only true God, our Father, as if, without the help of a second and a third divinity, equal to himself, he could not restore his frail creature, man. *We* have not the courage of our brethren. With the Scriptures in our hands, with the solemn attestations which they contain to the divine Unity, and to Christ's dependence, we dare not give to the God and Father of Jesus, any equal or rival in the glory of originating our redemption, or of accomplishing it by underived and infinite power. Are we asked, as we sometimes are, What is our hope, if Christ be not the supreme God? We answer, It is the boundless and almighty goodness of *his* Father and *our* Father; a goodness, which cannot require an infinite atonement for the sins of a frail and limited creature. God's essential and unchangeable mercy, not Christ's infinity, is the Scriptural foundation of a sinner's hope. In the Scriptures, our Heavenly Father is always represented as the sole, original spring, and first cause of our salvation; and let no one presume to divide his glory with another. That Jesus came to save us, we owe entirely to the Father's benevolent appointment. That Jesus is perfectly adequate to the work of our salvation, is to be believed, not because he is himself the supreme God, but because the supreme and unerring God selected, commissioned, and empowered him for this office. That his death is an important means of our salvation, we gratefully acknowledge; but ascribe its efficacy to the merciful disposition of God towards the human race. To build the hope of pardon on the independent and infinite sufficiency of Jesus Christ, is to build on an unscriptural and false foundation; for Jesus teaches us, that of himself he can do nothing; that all power is *given* to him by his Father; and that he is a proper object of trust, because he came not of himself,

or to do his own will, but because the Father sent him. We indeed lean on Christ, but it is because he is "a corner-stone, *chosen by God, and laid by God* in Zion." God's forgiving love, declared to mankind by Jesus Christ, and exercised through him, is the foundation of hope to the penitent, on which we primarily rest: and a firmer, the universe cannot furnish us.

(To be Continued.)

Alnwick Unitarian Controversy.

(Concluded from page 289.)

"Mr. Procter has likewise charged me with an attempt to shake the confidence of the people in '*the ministers of the Church, by imputing to them mercenary motives.*' It is an old adage, if the cap does not fit, you need not put it on. It is true, we all know that the very lucrative 'incomes of the established clergy do not depend upon the numbers that compose their congregations.' And we likewise know, that there are some who regard the fleece more than the flock. But, not to insinuate in the smallest degree against my opponent, what is the passage in my address which has given him such offence? It is the passage in which I refer to the restraints masters and mistresses are called upon to impose upon their servants. Now, by servants, we can understand neither more nor less than those who are in the employment of others; who, in a certain measure, depend upon their masters and mistresses for their support; and, if language has any meaning, Mr. P. has publicly called upon these employers to restrain those whom they employ, from attending the lectures delivered in the Unitarian Chapel,—or, to use his own beautiful language, '*the nocturnal orgies of spiritual intoxication and adultery!*' In what way, then, can the injunction be most effectually put in practice? Is it not by 'masters or mistresses' discharging from their employment those men or women who will not worship as they require—who will not, or who cannot, utter their Shibboleth? This would certainly be a principle of intolerance—a disgrace to the nineteenth century—an indelible stigma upon the English nation. Yet this is the spirit Mr. P. wishes to excite.—Therefore, I say again, that wherever such a spirit is manifested, it certainly merits reproach—it shows too much of the old leaven—it certainly indicates the very same feeling which Demetrius had, when he encouraged the people to shout 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians.'

"But if Mr. Procter supposes that I have attributed mercenary motives to the ministers of the Church, he has barefacedly enough repaid me in what he supposes my own coin. But, unfortunately for him, it is far deficient in weight—there is too much alloy in the gold, for any one to suppose that it is genuine. It is altogether a counterfeit, and will not suit the purpose. Unitarianism is not yet so very popular as to induce any man to embrace it

from a worldly spirit. Did the excellent Theophilus Lindsey increase his wealth by relinquishing his living and his views in the splendid establishment of the Church of England for Unitarianism? Were Wakefield, Jebb, Evanson, and Disney, instigated by worldly motives, when they retired from the Church, and opposed the authority of her creeds? Is he to be accused of mercenary motives, who, rather than sacrifice conscience, relinquished altogether the faith in which he had been educated, and the alluring prospects of a comfortable living in the Church of Scotland?—Certainly a more easy task, and as regards worldly interest and connexion, a more agreeable path than the one which conscience caused him to adopt. Yet this is the character whom Mr. P. accuses of a worldly spirit, and of making merchandise of you;—this is the person whose conduct, you are told, 'is one circumstance among the many, that prove him to be of the number of those denounced by St. Peter as false teachers.'

"Mr. P. likewise notices the query with which I closed my last address. 'How could Christ have a God and Father, if he was himself Almighty God?' This, he says, 'may be answered by another: How can man have a soul, if he is himself a living soul?' Surely Mr. P. was falling asleep when he wrote this query as an answer to my question. It is so ridiculous, that it may well be proposed to 'children.' Let me only ask him, Was man a living soul before the Almighty 'breathed into his nostrils, the breath of life?' Can man exist without his soul, which he receives from God? No. Then, according to Mr. P., Jesus Christ cannot exist without God the Father. This certainly is very strong Unitarianism. If the learned Gentleman can show that man was 'a living soul' before he received a soul from God, then, but not till then, will his query answer mine.

"In a note, Mr. P. endeavours to vindicate the application of the very sublime passage he applied to our Sunday Evening Worship, 'nocturnal orgies of spiritual intoxication and adultery.' This, when applied to Unitarianism, he calls 'the language of the Holy Ghost!' A noble plea for the profane swearer and the scoffing unbeliever. Because you think such language may be twisted or drawn from the Bible, therefore when you are displeased with your opponent, you may apply to him such epithets, and say it is 'the language of the Holy Ghost.' Gracious God! what teachers of Christianity the people have! It is no wonder if, '*in thy displeasure*,' thou hast sent quite a different labourer into this vineyard; for assuredly some of those who profess to be the servants of thy Son, are disgracing his name, and bringing contempt upon his holy religion.

"Yet this is not enough for the Christianity of our opponent. He says that my party (Unitarians) are described by the Apostle Peter as 'natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed!' Almighty Father, shall fallible man, the child of clay, presume to seize thy eternal throne, and act as the sovereign judge of his fellow men! Shall the professed ministers of Jesus be so destitute of every principle of Christianity, as to denounce those who wish to worship Thee acceptably—'as natural brute beasts, made to be

taken and destroyed!' This is assuredly the unholy spirit which made man imbrue his hands in his brother's blood. This is surely still the echo of that unholy monster's howling, which, in the days of darkness, thirsted after blood, and which rejoiced and shouted with joy at the sufferings of those noble spirits who have dignified humanity, shed a lustre over the martyr's page, and given an attestation of their love to truth. Unitarians are as 'natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed!' Shame! shame! I say, to this mode of abusing Scripture, and then calling it 'the language of the Holy Ghost.'"

To these observations of Mr. Wright, Mr. Procter briefly replied in an appeal to the Public, that,

"Painful as it is under present circumstances, my duty compels me to notice one part of Mr. Wright's last frothy publication; *viz.*—that wherein he twists my application of the Apostle Peter's words, 'as natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed,' into 'an echo of that unholy monster's howling, which in the days of darkness thirsted after blood.' This is ingenious, but it is the ingenuity of a pleader, who will say any thing, however fallacious, that *may* create an impression favourable to his cause. Mr. Wright knows well, that the impression thus attempted to be produced is a *false* impression. He knows well, that neither the words of the Apostle, nor my application of them, have any thing to do with a persecuting spirit; unless, indeed, that be persecution in the nineteenth century, which was charity in the first, *viz.* to warn 'unstable souls' of the dreadful consequences of suffering themselves to be 'beguiled' by 'false teachers.'

"The following is the whole verse, part of which only I quoted, entreating you to read the whole chapter in your Bibles. 'But these, as natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption.' (2 Pet. ii. 12.) Where the meaning of the comparison is obvious. 'As natural brute beasts are made to be taken and destroyed,' their fierce and turbulent dispositions being the cause of their destruction; so these false teachers, 'speaking evil of the things that they understand not, shall utterly perish in their own corruption'—utterly perish, not in body only, but in soul also; not by the hands of men, but by the judgment of God, who reserves for all such 'the mist of darkness for ever.'"

Mr. Wright thus answered the explanation:—

"In the note contained in his address to his "Friends and Fellow Townsmen," Mr. Procter, after endeavouring to vindicate the application of '*spiritual adultery*,' says, 'It is, in fact, the language of the Holy Ghost, which Mr. Wright terms low and grovelling; and, therefore, he (Mr. Wright) probably will not hesitate to give the same mild names to the still sterner language, in 2 Peter, chap. ii., where, besides the severe expressions above quoted, he will find his party described as *natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed*, as persons who *speak evil of the things they understand not.*' This, then, is the application of Mr.

P.'s language, that 'Unitarians are as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed,' and this is the application I have made in my reply. It required no ingenuity to twist it—it was the conclusion which every person who can read, must have drawn, and, from the language, we can infer nothing but a persecuting spirit. It is the same spirit which, in former days, made the blind votaries of superstition believe, that they were doing God service, by taking away the life of any one who was deemed a heretic. And, indeed, in this second appeal of Mr. P.'s, we only find him leaping from one position to another. He has now leaped from time to eternity—he has now assumed the throne of the Eternal—and judges where none but God can decide; for he tells us, that Unitarians 'shall utterly perish—not in body only, but in soul also; not by the hands of men, but by the judgment of God, who reserves for all such, the mists of darkness for ever!' I would have Mr. Procter to read the following passage: 'Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth.'"

In his Thursday evening lectures, Mr. Wright examined the Discourses of the Rev. W. Procter, M. A. the appendix to which, occasioned the curious advertisement inserted in the Christian Pioneer, No. V. p. 188. These lectures were, we learn, well attended.

The Rev. David Paterson, Minister of the Associate Congregation, Alnwick, also entered the lists against the Unitarians, and, in his sermon on the subject, appears likewise to have dealt not very sparingly in those ready furnished articles of ignorance and bigotry, calumny and misrepresentation. Mr. Wright having heard a discourse from this individual, addressed to him a letter, in which he says,

"As I am of opinion, that the people will have no objection to hear the question or points in dispute between Trinitarianism and Unitarianism, calmly and candidly discussed; and, as you appear to think, that Unitarianism cannot be supported upon the common translation, I have already expressed my readiness to meet with you, or any of the ministers in the town, in a public manner, and in a Christian spirit, to settle those differences which seem to agitate the minds of the people. Let us begin with the very first of those points upon which we disagree, and settle one before we proceed to another. Let the meetings be opened and closed with prayer; and let the whole be conducted with that spirit of brotherly love, which the gospel is so well calculated to inculcate. And, in order to do away with all dispute, and the better to satisfy the people, we may, if you are desirous, keep by the common translation, and make one part of it the key to the other. By this means, you and the other ministers of the town, will be prevented from going over the same ground, of which they profess to be so unfond, and the public will be enabled, at once, to perceive on which side the evidence of Scripture rests.

"Hoping this proposal (which nothing but the slanderous misrepresentations, which have hitherto been given of the opinions of Unitarians, could induce me to make) will meet your approbation; and, that 'we may all be led to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus;' and that we may not only profess, but practise it, is my earnest prayer to God."

This letter was dated the 3d January, 1827. On the 10th, as Mr. Paterson had returned no answer, Mr. Wright again addressed him. We quote the following sentences:

"When I last wrote you, I considered you would act as a gentleman, and as became a minister of the Gospel. As the former, it was certainly in accordance with the rules of civility, that you should have made some answer to the communication:—as the latter, it becomes you to instruct the ignorant, to rescue from the thraldom of error, those whom you suppose are entangled in its snare. You are my superior in years, and if you imagine I am in the wrong path, it is certainly your duty to use every means in your power, to put me in that which is right. I am not aware, that my former epistle manifested that spirit, which will not yield to evidence; and the proposal I made, was certainly one, which would afford you an excellent opportunity of confuting and correcting, what you may consider my mistaken notions; and, not only so, but also of manifesting to the inhabitants of this town, the superiority of your religious principles; and more especially, as I proposed to meet you upon the broad basis of the common translation.

"But your silence induces me to think, you wish to lull asleep the whole affair. This may do very well on the part of the aggressor. The serpent, after he has spit his venom, may wish again to bask in the sunbeam; but can the inoffensive traveller, at whom it was aimed, allow the reptile to repose in security? It is certainly his duty to deprive the monster of its sting, or at least to erect a monument, that may warn all who pass, of the enemy which lies that way. He is certainly more like a child of God, and a disciple of Jesus, who does not feel content with his own safety, who cannot rest in indifference, when he reflects that many of his fellow-men may be exposed to the danger, which he blesses God for escaping. He is the true follower of his Master, who, believing that certain talents are committed to him, does not wrap them up in a napkin, and bury them in the earth, or allow them to sleep within his own bosom, but turns them to the best advantage, and extends their blessing to all mankind.

"I again make known my readiness to meet you publicly, and examine those points upon which we differ. Or, if you are unfond of public discussion, I have no objection to meet in a more private manner. Say, that the whole audience be no more than twelve or fourteen. It is my earnest desire, if possible, to have truth, and nothing but the truth; and wherever truth can be found, I wish it to prevail; because it is truth that must renovate and renew the world. It is truth that shall make man the friend of man. It is truth that shall make the heart glow with love to

the Great Author of all things, and establish that righteousness and peace, which are predicted of the Messiah's kingdom.

"I shall expect to hear from you, in the course of a day or two. If not, I hold myself at liberty to act as I may think convenient, towards giving publicity to these communications."

No notice being taken of these communications, Mr. Wright, after a few weeks, published them, with some introductory remarks. These, we think, are excellent, and prove on which side the Christian spirit, and the scriptural argument lies.

"These letters are published, not as a vain boast—not as a defence of those doctrines which Unitarians believe;—but only to expose the means which are now employed to deter people from entering the Unitarian Chapel, and thinking and acting for themselves. They are now laid before an enlightened and liberal public, in the confidence that they will not condemn unheard—and in the hope that they will at all times draw a broad line of distinction between what may be an error in judgment, and a base practice. It is possible that the Unitarians may be mistaken, it is possible that they may not have arrived at the whole truth. But so long as they believe what they profess to be the revealed Word of God, and the testimony of Christ, so long surely are they warranted in their dissent, and so long must it be illiberal to rank them with infidels, and to stigmatize them as *sophists* and *deceivers*. The Unitarian believes as firmly as it is possible for his mind to be convinced—that Trinitarianism is erroneous. But would he be justified from that, in saying that all Trinitarians are idolaters, blasphemers, deceivers, and sophists; or in denouncing the serious though mistaken worshipper to eternal destruction? Surely not.

"May all search for truth, and avow what they believe; for it is only such a profession that can be acceptable in the sight of God. And with best wishes for all his Christian brethren, of whatever sect, party, or denomination, and in hopes that, however divided here below, they shall meet in heaven, the author presents the following letters to the public."

Here, we believe, the controversy has at present terminated. We thank Mr. Wright for the service he has thus rendered to free inquiry and scriptural truth; and we trust he will continue as he has commenced—the ardent and fearless promulgator of pure and undefiled religion—the chastiser of bigotry, whether established or dissenting—and the sincere friend of every good man, whatever be the faith he may profess.

Dr. Channing's Discourse, at New-York.

(Continued from page 299.)

II. Unitarianism is the system most favourable to piety, because it holds forth and preserves inviolate the *spirit-*

uality of God. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth." It is of great importance to the progress and elevation of the religious principle, that we should *refine* more and more our conceptions of God; that we should separate from him all material properties, and whatever is limited or imperfect in our own nature; that we should regard him as a pure intelligence, an unmixed and infinite Mind. When it pleased God to select the Jewish people, and place them under miraculous interpositions, one of the first precepts given them was, that they should not represent God under any bodily form, any graven image, or the likeness of any creature. Next came Christianity, which had this as one of its great objects, to render religion still more spiritual, by abolishing the ceremonial and outward worship of former times, and by discarding those grosser modes of describing God, through which the ancient prophets had sought to impress an unrefined people.

Now, Unitarianism concurs with this sublime moral purpose of God. It asserts his spirituality. It approaches him under no bodily form, but as a pure Spirit, as the infinite and universal Mind. On the other hand, it is the direct influence of Trinitarianism, to materialize men's conceptions of God; and, in truth, this system is a relapse into the error of the rudest and earliest ages, into the worship of a corporeal God. Its leading feature is, the doctrine of a God clothed with a body, and acting and speaking through a material frame,—of the Infinite Divinity dying on a cross; a doctrine, which in earthliness reminds us of the mythology of the rudest pagans, and which a pious Jew, in the twilight of the Mosaic religion, would have shrunk from with horror. It seems to me no small objection to the Trinity, that it supposes God to take a body in the later and more improved ages of the world, when it is plain, that such a manifestation, if needed at all, was peculiarly required in the infancy of the race. The effect of such a system in debasing the idea of God, in associating with the Divinity, human passions and infirmities, is too obvious to need much elucidation. On the supposition that the second person of the Trinity became incarnate, God may be said to be a material being, on the same general ground on which this is affirmed of man; for man is material only by the union of mind with the body; and the very meaning of incarnation is, that God took a

body, through which he acted and spoke, as the human soul operates through its corporeal organs. Every bodily affection may thus be ascribed to God. Accordingly, the Trinitarian, in his most solemn act of adoration, is heard to pray in these appalling words: "Good Lord, deliver us; by the mystery of thy holy incarnation, by thy holy nativity and circumcision, by thy baptism, fasting, and temptation, by thine agony and bloody sweat, by thy cross and passion, good Lord, deliver us." Now I ask you to judge, from the principles of human nature, whether to worshippers, who adore their God for his wounds and tears, his agony, and blood, and sweat, the ideas of corporeal existence and human suffering will not predominate over the conceptions of a purely spiritual essence; whether the mind, in clinging to the man, will not lose the God; whether a surer method for depressing and adulterating the pure thought of the Divinity could have been devised?

The Roman Catholics, true to human nature and their creed, have sought, by painting and statuary, to bring their imagined God before their eyes; and have thus obtained almost as vivid impressions of him, as if they had lived with him on the earth. The Protestant condemns them for using these similitudes and representations in their worship; but if a Trinitarian, he does so to his own condemnation. For if, as he believes, it was once a duty to bow in adoration before the living body of his incarnate God, what possible guilt can there be in worshipping before the pictured or sculptured memorial of the same being? Christ's body may as truly be represented by the artist as any other human form; and its image may be used as effectually and properly as that of an ancient sage or hero to recall him with vividness to the mind. Is it said, that God has expressly forbidden the use of images in our worship? But why was that prohibition laid on the Jews? For this express reason, that God had not presented himself to them in any form, which admitted of representation. Hear the language of Moses, "Take good heed, lest ye make you a graven image, for ye saw *no manner of similitude* on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire."* If, since that period, God has taken a body, then the reason of the prohibition has ceased; and if he took a body, among other purposes,

* Deut. iv. 15, 16.

that he might assist the weakness of the intellect, which needs a material form, then a statue, which lends so great an aid to the conception of an absent friend, is not only justified, but seems to be required.

This materializing and embodying of the Supreme Being, which is the essence of Trinitarianism, cannot but be adverse to a growing and exalted piety. Human and divine properties, being confounded in one being, lose their distinctness. The splendours of the Godhead are dimmed. The worshippers of an incarnate Deity, through the frailty of their nature, are strongly tempted to fasten chiefly on his human attributes; and their devotion, instead of rising to the Infinite God, and taking the peculiar character which Infinity inspires, becomes rather a human affection, borrowing much of its fervour from the ideas of suffering, blood, and death. It is indeed possible, that this God-man (to use the strange phraseology of Trinitarians) may excite the mind more easily, than a purely spiritual Divinity; just as a tragedy, addressed to the eye and ear, will interest the multitude more than the contemplation of the most exalted character. But the emotions which are most easily roused, are not the profoundest or most enduring. This human love, inspired by a human God, though at first more fervid, cannot grow and spread through the soul, like the reverential attachment, which an infinite, spiritual Father awakens. Refined conceptions of God, though more slowly attained, have a more quickening and all-pervading energy, and admit of perpetual accessions of brightness, life, and strength.

True, we shall be told, that Trinitarianism has converted only one of its three persons into a human Deity, and that the other two remain purely spiritual beings. But who does not know, that man will attach himself most strongly to the God who has become a man? Is not this even a duty, if the Divinity has taken a body to place himself within the reach of human comprehension and sympathy? That the Trinitarian's views of the Divinity will be coloured more by his visible, tangible, corporeal God, than by those persons of the Trinity, who remain comparatively hidden in their invisible and spiritual essence, is so accordant with the principles of our nature, as to need no laboured proof.

My friends, hold fast the doctrine of a purely spiritual Divinity. It is one of the great supports and instruments

of a vital piety. It brings God near, as no other doctrine can. One of the leading purposes of Christianity, is to give us an ever growing sense of God's immediate presence, a consciousness of him in our souls. Now, just as far as corporeal or limited attributes enter into our conception of him, we remove him from us. He becomes an outward, distant being, instead of being viewed and felt as dwelling in the soul itself. It is an unspeakable benefit of the doctrine of a purely spiritual God, that he can be regarded as inhabiting, filling our spiritual nature; and through this union with our minds, he can and does become the object of an intimacy and friendship, such as no embodied being can call forth.

III. Unitarianism is the system most favourable to piety, because it presents a *distinct* and *intelligible* object of worship, a being, whose nature, whilst inexpressibly sublime, is yet simple and suited to human apprehension. An infinite Father is the most exalted of all conceptions, and yet the least perplexing. It involves no incongruous ideas. It is illustrated by analogies from our own nature. It coincides with that fundamental law of the intellect, through which we demand a cause proportioned to effects. It is, also, as interesting as it is rational; so that it is peculiarly congenial with the improved mind. The sublime simplicity of God, as he is taught in Unitarianism, by relieving the understanding from perplexity, and by placing him within the reach of thought and affection, gives him peculiar power over the soul. Trinitarianism, on the other hand, is a riddle. Men call it a mystery, but it is mysterious, not like the great truths of religion, by its vastness and grandeur, but by the irreconcilable ideas which it involves. One God, consisting of three persons or agents, is so strange a being, so unlike our own minds, and all others with which we hold intercourse, is so misty, so incongruous, so contradictory, that he cannot be apprehended with that distinctness, and that feeling of reality, which belong to the opposite system. Such a heterogeneous being, who is at the same moment one and many; who includes in his own nature the relations of Father and Son, or, in other words, is Father and Son to himself; who, in one of his persons, is at the same moment the supreme God and a mortal man, omniscient and ignorant, almighty and impotent; such a being is certainly the most puzzling and distracting object ever presented to

human thought. Trinitarianism, instead of teaching an intelligible God, offers to the mind a monstrous compound of hostile attributes, bearing plain marks of those ages of darkness, when Christianity shed but a faint ray, and the diseased fancy teemed with prodigies and unnatural creations. In contemplating a being, who presents such different and inconsistent aspects, the mind finds nothing to rest upon; and instead of receiving distinct and harmonious impressions, is disturbed by shifting, unsettled images. To commune with such a being, must be as hard as to converse with a man of three different countenances, speaking with three different tongues. The believer in this system must forget it, when he prays, or he could find no repose in devotion. Who can compare it in distinctness, reality, and power, with the simple doctrine of One Infinite Father?

IV. Unitarianism promotes a fervent and enlightened piety, by asserting *the absolute and unbounded perfection of God's character*. This is the highest service which can be rendered to mankind. Just and generous conceptions of the Divinity are the soul's true wealth. To spread these, is to contribute more effectually, than by any other agency, to the progress and happiness of the intelligent creation. To obscure God's glory, is to do greater wrong than to blot out the sun. The character and influence of a religion must answer to the views which it gives of the Divinity; and there is a plain tendency in that system, which manifests the divine perfections most resplendently, to awaken the sublimest and most blessed piety.

Now, Trinitarianism has a fatal tendency to degrade the character of the Supreme Being. By multiplying divine persons, it takes from each the glory of independent, all-sufficient, absolute perfection. This may be shown in various particulars. And in the first place, the very idea, that three persons in the divinity are in any degree important, implies and involves the imperfection of each; for it is plain, that if one divine person possess all *possible* power, wisdom, love, and happiness, nothing will be gained to himself or to the creation by joining with him two, or two hundred other persons. To say that he needs others for any purpose or in any degree, is to strip him of independent and all-sufficient majesty. If our Father in Heaven, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is not of himself sufficient to all the wants of his creation;

if, by his union with other persons, he can accomplish any good to which he is not of himself equal; or if he thus acquires a claim to the least degree of trust or hope, to which he is not of himself entitled by his own independent attributes; then it is plain, he is not a being of infinite and absolute perfection. Now, Trinitarianism teaches, that the highest good accrues to the human race from the existence of three divine persons, sustaining different offices and relations to the world; and it regards the Unitarian, as subverting the foundation of human hope, by asserting that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus is alone and singly God. Thus it derogates from his infinite glory.

In the next place, Trinitarianism degrades the character of the Supreme Being, by laying its disciples under the necessity of making such a distribution of offices and relations among the three persons, as will serve to designate and distinguish them; for in this way it interferes with the sublime conception of One Infinite Person, in whom all glories are concentred. If we are required to worship three persons, we must view them in different lights, or they will be mere repetitions of each other, mere names and sounds, presenting no objects, conveying no meaning to the mind. Some appropriate character, some peculiar acts, feelings, and relations must be ascribed to each. In other words, the glory of all must be shorn, that some special distinguishing lustre may be thrown on each. Accordingly, creation is associated peculiarly with the conception of the Father; satisfaction for human guilt with that of the Son; whilst sanctification, the noblest work of all, is given to the Holy Spirit as his more particular work. By a still more fatal distribution, the work of justice, the office of vindicating the rights of the Divinity, falls peculiarly to the Father; whilst the loveliness of interposing mercy clothes peculiarly the person of the Son. By this unhappy influence of Trinitarianism, from which common minds at least cannot escape, the splendours of the Godhead, being scattered among three objects, instead of being united in One Infinite Father, are dimmed; and he, whose mind is thoroughly and practically possessed by this system, can hardly conceive the effulgence of glory in which the One God offers himself to a pious believer in his strict unity.

But the worst has not been told. I observe, then, in

the third place, that if Three Divine Persons are believed in, such an administration or government of the world must be ascribed to them, as will furnish them with a sphere of operation. No man will admit three persons into his creed, without finding a use for them. Now, it is an obvious remark, that a system of the universe, which involves and demands more than One Infinite Agent, must be wild, extravagant, and unworthy the perfect God; because there is no possible or conceivable good, to which such an agent is not adequate. Accordingly, we find Trinitarianism connecting itself with a scheme of administration, exceedingly derogatory to the divine character. It teaches, that the Infinite Father saw fit to put into the hands of our first parents, the character and condition of their whole progeny; and that, through one act of disobedience, the whole race bring with them into being a corrupt nature, or are born depraved. It teaches, that the offences of a short life, though begun and spent under this disastrous influence, merit endless punishment, and that God's law threatens this infinite penalty; and that man is thus burdened with a guilt, which no sufferings of the created universe can expiate, which nothing but the sufferings of an Infinite Being can purge away. In this condition of human nature, Trinitarianism finds a sphere of action for its different persons. I am aware that some Trinitarians, on hearing this statement of their system, may reproach me with ascribing to them the errors of Calvinism, a system which they abhor as much as ourselves. But none of the peculiarities of Calvinism enter into this exposition. I have given what I understand to be the leading features of Trinitarianism all the world over; and the benevolent professors of that faith, who recoil from this statement, must blame not the preacher, but the creeds and establishments by which these doctrines are diffused. For ourselves, we look with horror and grief on the views of God's government, which are naturally and intimately united with Trinitarianism. They take from us our Father in Heaven, and substitute a stern and unjust lord. Our filial love and reverence rise up against them. We say to the Trinitarian, touch any thing but the perfections of God. Cast no stain on that spotless purity and loveliness. We can endure any errors, but those which subvert or unsettle the conviction of God's paternal goodness. Urge not upon us a system, which

makes existence a curse, and wraps the universe in gloom. Leave us the cheerful light, the free and healthful atmosphere, of a liberal and rational faith; the ennobling and consoling influences of the doctrine, which nature and revelation in blessed concord teach us, of One Father of Unbounded and Inexhaustible Love.

(To be Continued.)

THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

GLASGOW, *May* 1, 1827.

AMONG the numerous means of improving the moral condition of the people, introducing to their minds correct principles of action, and of establishing virtuous habits, the dissemination of Tracts has long occupied a commanding rank. We are aware, indeed, that much prejudice has been excited against the use of this means of moral instruction and improvement, in consequence of the foolish and ridiculous stories which have been circulated by some of the Tract Societies. Leaving out of consideration the feelings of taste, there are many of these works, certainly, which cannot but excite the loathing, and call forth the disapprobation of every well-regulated mind. Their obvious tendency is, to make fanatic passion drown the dictates of the judgment—to substitute a nauseous cant for Christian liberality—and to lead persons to imagine, that religion consists in sickly sentimental raptures, rather than in doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God. Religious tracts are, in consequence, deemed by numbers synonymous with absurdity, and their mistaken but well-meaning disseminators regarded as objects of pity, rather than models for imitation. We cannot, however, agree in this sweeping censure, though we do think that too good a ground has been given for it by many of the works which have been circulated. Much less would we abandon the use of this instrument of human good, because it has, by others, been abused or perverted. Rather would we exert a greater power, to rescue it from hands which have misapplied it, and endeavour to guide its efforts into better channels and to the accomplishment of more useful ends, by the adoption of better measures,

and the contributions of more gifted intellects. We apprehend, that similar views to these operated on the minds of those respected individuals, who, in 1809, formed "The Christian Tract Society, for the purpose of distributing amongst the poor, small cheap tracts, inculcating moral conduct, upon Christian principles." This Society has met with a good deal of support, though, certainly, not so much as its merits deserved. The main cause of this may perhaps be easily discovered. It is not, like other Societies, sectarian in its object. It proceeds on the broad basis of Christianity, without reference to the peculiarities of this church, or the distinctions of that party. This principle, which we consider one of its distinguishing excellences, will, of course, in the view of the bigot, the fanatic, and the sectary, be regarded as a striking blemish. The Society has, however, pursued its course with steadiness and earnestness. It has printed fifty-three tracts, of which between four and five hundred thousand copies have been published. The price of these vary from one penny to sixpence. Their literary execution is admirable. All of them are useful and interesting; some particularly so. Their simplicity and plainness recommend them to the young and to the poor, whilst, from the perusal of many of them, the most cultivated mind will derive pleasure, and, we hope, improvement. We are persuaded, that a more instructive present cannot be given, than these little works of "The Christian Tract Society." Our Scottish readers, particularly, will be glad to learn, that the Rev. George Harris has undertaken to be the gratuitous agent of the Society in Scotland. From him, any of the publications may be procured. We are convinced, they will gladly avail themselves of the opportunity of aiding the labours of an Institution, founded on truly Christian principles, and having for its end truly Christian objects; whilst, to all our readers, we cordially recommend "The Christian Tract Society," as highly meriting their zealous and persevering co-operation and support.

On Friday, April 13, was held, in Mosely-Street Chapel, Manchester, the annual meeting of the Lancashire and Cheshire Unitarian Missionary Society. The Rev. J. G. Robberds kindly undertook to preach the sermon, in consequence of the unavoidable absence of the Rev. J. R. Beard of Salford. The service was introduced by the

Rev. J. J. Tayler; and a very impressive and appropriate discourse was delivered by Mr. Robberds, from Mat. ix. 36, 37, 38.

After the service at the Chapel, the friends from the country repaired to the different houses of their brethren in Manchester, where hospitality was provided for them.

In the afternoon, a meeting was held in the School-room, to receive the Committee's Report, and to transact the necessary business of the Society: the Rev. J. J. Tayler in the chair. Several persons addressed the meeting, on the importance of missionary exertions, and the degree of success which has hitherto attended such as have been made in this populous district. The friends then retired to the Chapel, to partake of the Lord's Supper, which was administered in a most solemn manner by Mr. Robberds. The service was highly gratifying: and a rite which was a part of the concluding scene of our Lord's mission, appears to be peculiarly appropriate, to terminate the business of a day devoted to the furtherance of missionary efforts in favour of knowledge, piety, and benevolence.

It appears from the Report of the Committee, that this Society has regularly supplied, during the past year, five places with the means of moral and religious improvement, besides occasional assistance which it has afforded to other congregations. Most of the stations under its patronage, are in a flourishing state; the Sunday Schools are improving, in some of which there are from one hundred to one hundred and fifty children. Prayer-meetings, and meetings for discussion on disputed topics, have, at some of the stations, been regularly held. The Society's Missionary, Mr. Buckland, has attended several of these meetings, and has given a most pleasing account of the good sense and pious feeling which pervade their proceedings. Three courses of week-evening lectures, on doctrinal and practical subjects, have also been delivered by the preachers of this Society. We are pleased to learn, that the Society at Astley, is in a most flourishing condition; a rapid increase has taken place both in the congregation, and the Sunday School. The Missionary lately spent three weeks with this interesting and inquiring people; and preached on the Sunday, and occasionally during the week, to one hundred and twenty, and, sometimes, to one hundred and sixty persons. There are upwards of one hundred and fifty children educated in the Sunday School. The teachers, about

thirty in number, regularly meet on Saturday evenings, for the purpose of mutual improvement in reading, writing, and various information. At these meetings, the Missionary preachers have sometimes attended, and have been peculiarly pleased with the desire evinced for increased attainments in knowledge and in virtue. The Society at Astley, is a living demonstration of the suitableness of Christian Unitarianism, to the wants of the poor; and is also an instance of the benefits arising from persevering exertions in the cause of truth.

The preachers of the past year have been the ministers of Manchester: several benevolent and respectable persons of their different congregations, and three regular Missionaries, Messrs. A. Bennett, J. Ashworth, and G. Buckland. To all these gentlemen, the Society is greatly indebted; and the latter it has engaged as a Missionary for one year. From his exertions, the most beneficial results are anticipated.

The funds of the Society, we are sorry to observe, are inadequate for its purposes. But we most sincerely hope, that its friends will be enabled, by additional assistance, not only to supply the stations which they now have, but to extend still wider, the purifying and consoling influences of genuine Christianity.

The Rev. B. Mardon, M. A. has accepted the invitation of the Unitarian Congregation at Maidstone, Kent, to undertake the office of Minister to that Society.

We hear, that the Rev. W. Hincks, the Minister of Renshaw-Street Chapel, Liverpool, is to succeed the Rev. W. Turner, Jun. as one of the Tutors in the Manchester College, York.

We have waited in anxious expectation, that the Rev. Barnard Slater, of Rochdale, would have attempted to justify his charges and censures; or have apologised for wounding the feelings of the living, and calumniating the dead. We have hitherto waited in vain. We give him the opportunity of another month, for proving his right to be considered as a faithful minister of Jesus, and of manifesting the fruits of his own declaration—"It is thirty years since God brought me to himself."

THE

CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

No. 10. JUNE, 1827. Vol. I.

To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.

SIR,

I take the liberty of sending you some remarks upon a Sermon lately published here, entitled, "The Essential Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, illustrated in a Brief Examination of the Socinian and Arian systems," &c. by the Rev. Robert Stewart, A. M. Minister of the Gospel at Broughshane.

The Sermon, indeed, is not deserving of remark, from having added any thing to the argument for what is called the orthodox faith upon this subject. Whatever new argument he adduces, is weak, and, in re-stating the old, he evinces a presumptuous confidence of assertion that can only injure the cause wherein it appears. There is no question, indeed, requiring a more humble docility of mind, and a more determined resolution to proceed no further than Scripture fully warrants, than the important question of the person of our Lord.

His very text, and his remarks upon it, show what we may expect from his use of Scripture. His text is Isaiah lxiii. 1, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel," &c.

This verse he assumes to be a direct and undoubted prophecy of the Messiah, and yet it is nowhere quoted as a prophecy in the New Testament. It is not even referred to by any of the writers, as far as I know, except by John in Revelation, where he adopts the prophet's metaphor of the wine-press of the wrath of God, but makes no allusion to it as a prophecy. There is a diversity of opinion among the best critics, as to the meaning of the verse; and there is this strong objection to its being applied to the Messiah, that the Messiah did not come from Edom, *i. e.* Idumea or Bozrah, but from Nazareth. There could have been little objection made to the author's adopting the imagery of the sacred prophet, in expressing his own opinions on any subject, for such use is often made of Scripture language; and if a person have studied the Sacred Writings

with intense interest, he can with difficulty avoid such adaptation of its phraseology, in expressing his own conceptions. But it is unpardonable to found an argument on a passage, as clearly prophetic of the Messiah, when there is no evidence of its being so whatever; and it is still worse to proceed, as Mr. Stewart has done, in the following passage:—"The Scripture question 'Who is this that cometh from Edom,' must be answered by Scripture information alone. All attempts to answer it from other quarters, will be as unsuccessful as they are presumptuous.. The Scripture informs us, that he is the 'Mighty God,' 'the Everlasting Father,' and 'God manifested in the flesh.'"

Now, how would this sentence be interpreted by the generality of readers? Would it not seem, that this answer was the answer given in Scripture to the question asked? And yet, part of it is taken from the 9th chapter of the prophet, and thus, by anticipation I suppose, the 6th verse of the 9th chapter is an answer to the 1st verse of the 63d chapter; and the other part, more absurdly still, is taken from Paul's Epistle to Timothy.

Rammohun Roy's remarks upon this chapter of Isaiah, are very judicious: "What expression does Isaiah make use of in chapter lxiii. that the passage can be interpreted as speaking the language of Jesus? Nothing of the kind that I can perceive. It contains rather, such denunciations as are considered totally inconsistent with the office and character of the meek and lowly Jesus, the messenger of peace on earth, and good will in heaven towards men. Can the following expressions, 'I will tread them in my anger,' 'their blood shall be upon my garment,' be ascribed to Jesus, who, so far from treading down the inhabitants of Edom or Bozrah, or any other land, and sprinkling their blood upon his garment, came to reconcile them to God, and laboured in behalf of them and of all men, even suffering his own blood to be shed, rather than refrain from teaching them the way of salvation?" He justly observes, that the passage has no more allusion to Jesus than to Moses or Joshua, and considers the prophet as speaking of the destruction of Edom and Bozrah, under the wrath of God, for their infidelity towards Israel.

Mr. Stewart's mode of proof is sometimes very compendious. You are only required to admit, as incontrovertible, the very point in question, and the work is done. Thus: "Because, therefore, to those who come unpre-

judiced by any peculiar theory, to the Scriptures, and read them with that deference which is due to a revelation of the will of God, Christ Jesus will never appear to be either mere man or created angel. I consider these two answers to the question in my text [by which words, he means the Arian and Socinian schemes], unscriptural and erroneous." This must certainly seem a very satisfactory mode of settling the matter, when we consider, that the question, and only question at issue is, whether, upon a serious consideration of the Holy Scripture, with humble and teachable minds, we do conscientiously believe that the Apostles intended to set forth the doctrine, "that there is but one God, and that he exists Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;" or, in the words of the Athanasian creed, that the Father is God, and the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, and yet there are not three Gods, but one God!

I hope there are but few instances of such unwarrantable and presumptuous judging of others, in controversialists of the present day, as is to be found in this sentence, "Now I object to the two answers in question; *because, without, I think, a solitary exception, the persons who adhere to them are proud of their understandings.*" Presumptuous man! Who gave you an insight into the minds of all past and present Arians and Socinians? Where did you get the prerogative of searching the hearts and trying the reins? Take heed to thyself and to thy doctrine, and beware, lest he that seeth and judgeth may find something very remote from humbleness of mind and singleness of heart, in the formation or the publication of your opinions. This is your own concern: I judge you not: but, as you shall stand before God, ponder well, and see whether it is pure regard for truth that prompts to these slanders. Nor is this the only slander. Listen to one or two more: "The partition-wall between the Arian, the Deist, and the Atheist, is indeed slight as the web of the gossamer. The Arian denies the divinity of the Redeemer, *not because the Scriptures do not teach*, but because he has learned from natural religion." "Their [the Arian and Socinian] system seems calculated only to pull down, but not to build up. Its authors appear, to use a modern technical phrase, to have 'the organ of destructiveness' in high perfection, for they are active in overthrowing the authority of the Scriptures, and reducing them in size [the size of the book seems to be a very important matter

in his eyes]; but I have not heard of an Arian mission to convert the heathen, or of Arians anxious to promote the Protestant reformation. They seem either to think that their own system of religion is worthless, or they consider religion in general useless, and the forms of it a matter of indifference."

Truly, this Mr. Stewart seems to have a very high opinion of his own missionary labours. He was sent to preach in a few decayed Presbyterian congregations in the south of Ireland, with a view to their revival; and when so employed, he had his expenses paid, travelled comfortably in the stage-coaches, was hospitably entertained by Lord Mountcashel, and other gentlemen in that hospitable country; and now he plumes himself as much as if he had been traversing the burning sands of Africa all the while, or had undergone as many dangers as the Apostle Paul himself; with whom, and the other Apostles, he almost intimates that he and his orthodox brethren may be compared, for being instant in season and out of season. It would be worth while to know what missions the Synod of Ulster supports of its own, or how much pecuniary aid it affords to other missionary societies? It would be well also, for Mr. Stewart to think how the Protestant church, at the time of the Reformation, could have answered a similar objection made by Roman Catholics, and to consider well whether the Protestant Church has as yet done as much in the way of missions, as their Roman Catholic brethren have?

He makes four objections to the Arian and Socinian schemes jointly, and a fifth to the Arian in particular. It would require more paper than you could spare me, to enter at large into the consideration of these; but I will make one or two remarks on each. The first objection is, that they originated with the learned, and are, to this day, to them almost exclusively confined. Now, this we will admit, provided he will allow that the "unlearned and ignorant men," at whom the Sanhedrim marvelled, and who gave to us our fundamental principle, that "we ought to hearken to God rather than to man," were among the learned. But it is on his second objection that he places his main dependence, although he has announced it very obscurely. I will put it in form for him:—The Scriptures expressly forbid idolatry—the Scriptures command to worship Christ—therefore, to worship Christ is not

idolatry! Again, To worship a creature is idolatry—to worship Christ is not idolatry—therefore, Christ is not a creature! Some of your college readers may ascertain whether these are in proper mode and figure; but I think Mr. Stewart should be much obliged to me for putting his argument in an intelligible form.

To this I have one answer to make in the first instance. Whatever Almighty God commands me to worship, I will worship. All I design by my worship is to please him, and I please him by obeying his commands. But I require very satisfactory proof that the command proceeds from God; and I become more scrupulous in the proof that I require, in proportion as the alleged command recedes from that intimation of his will which I have in all my faculties and feelings. Many Arians have maintained that worship should be paid to Christ. I am not one of these; because I think our Lord's command peremptory and decisive: but *they* are not well acquainted with the Old Testament, who do not know that the organs or instruments by whom God appeared to the Patriarchs, had vows vowed to them, and prayers offered to them, by the name of that Almighty God, whose representatives they were.

Let us take one example that he brings of worship to Christ. He says, "that the Heaven-directed wise men came, fell down, and worshipped Jesus, even when a babe in Bethlehem; and the inspired historian has recorded the transaction, without imputing blame to the wise men, or charging them with idolatry."—*i. e.* Heaven-directed men worshipped the babe at Bethlehem—Heaven-directed men could not practise idolatry—*ergo*, to worship the babe at Bethlehem was not idolatry! Again, To worship a creature is idolatry—to worship the babe at Bethlehem was not idolatry—*ergo*, the babe at Bethlehem was not a creature! In short, on his own principle, the worship of any object but the true one is idolatry; and, as "there is but one object of worship, the Trinity in Unity," unless this Trinity in Unity were comprehended in the babe at Bethlehem, the wise men were directed by Heaven to an act of idolatry. Need I explain the true state of the case? —that the wise men came to look for him that was born king of the Jews; that they naturally expected that this would be the king's son; that they were miraculously directed to him, when the Saviour was born, and offered their prostrations and their incense to him as the future

king of the land; and that Herod, without any direction from Heaven, pretended that he wished to worship him. Or, need I repeat what has been said again and again, that prostration was an expression of respect for superiors, as well as an expression of adoration; and that no argument can be drawn from the instances that Mr. Stewart adduces, while the lepers and others, cured of their diseases, are said to have worshipped Christ? But, though trespassing so much upon your indulgence, I may remark, that Cornelius—who was told by Peter to stand up, for that he himself also was a man—was a Roman, by whom prostration was used not as a mark of respect or salutation (for the Romans did not use it), but as an act of worship; and that the inhabitants of Lystria showed, beyond doubt, that religious worship was meant, by bringing oxen and garlands to the gates, and preparing to offer sacrifices, which were unequivocal marks of their intentions: to say nothing of their calling Barnabas Jupiter, and Paul Mercury, or of their lifting up their voices and saying, "the gods are come down to us in the likeness of men;" and yet, in the sermon, Peter's lifting up Cornelius, and Paul's eagerness to prevent the sacrifices of the Lystrians, are contrasted with our Saviour's not refusing worship from the lepers! and, I suppose, the babe not refusing worship at Bethlehem, as if the difference arose from the consciousness of our Lord, that supreme worship was his indispensable right, as Lord God Almighty!

As I am totally unable to see any thing in his third objection (which is taken from the power exercised by our Saviour over animate and inanimate nature), that is at all applicable to the Arian opinion, I must pass it by without note or comment.

The fourth objection is remarkable for assuming the point in question, but more particularly for a most extraordinary assertion, that I should wish to see proved, *viz.* that there are a *thousand* titles similar to these "the Mighty God," "the Everlasting Father," "the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending," "in whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," "God," &c. ascribed to our Lord in Scripture.

But, being myself a firm believer in what is generally understood by the Arian scheme, I was most curious to see his fifth objection, which was peculiar to it; and I was much surprised to find, that a faith which I had formed

from Scripture only, was "a gratuitous supposition—the child of conjecture—the offspring of fancy, having no more foundation in Scripture, than any of the peculiar doctrines of the Koran; and *that there is only one passage in the New Testament, in which Arians have even a plausible foundation for their theory of the Son's inferiority!*" I confess that I feel here disposed to behave as every disputant feels at liberty to do, when his adversary is driven to a palpable absurdity, *viz.* to leave him to enjoy his absurdity as he pleases. At all events, I have taken up too much room, concerning a publication that a majority of your readers will never see, and must now conclude; but I am willing, at any time, to enter into a full discussion of the point, whether it was the *intention* of our Lord and his Apostles to inculcate a belief in a Trinity in Unity, as a fundamental article of faith, without which a man cannot be a Christian, and cannot be saved.—Yours, &c.

Belfast, April, 1827. V. D. M.

On the Language of Scripture.

(Continued from page 329.)

The plural termination of the Hebrew word, אלהים, *aleim*, God, is urged to support the doctrine of the Trinity; but the best Hebrew scholars have rejected this irrational interpretation. As the authority of Calvin has great weight in this country, we shall give his opinion on this subject: "Moses uses the term *aleim*, a word of the plural number, which some are accustomed to infer denotes three persons in the Deity. But I do not lay any stress on this word, as it does not contain any thing like a solid proof of such a doctrine. But readers should rather be warned against such strained interpretations of Scripture." Dr. Geddes, who translated many books of the Old Testament, and well understood the Hebrew language, asks, "Do the plural forms אלהים, *aleim*, and אלהי, denote a plurality of persons when applied to the one true God? No; not any more than אדינים, *adunim*, and אדיני, *aduni*, denote a plurality of lords; בוראים, *buraim*, and בוראי, *burai*, a plurality of creators; פנים, *phenim*, and פני, *pheni*, a plurality of faces, or חיים, *hiim*, a plurality of lives. It is truly strange, that such a notion should ever have been entertained; and indeed, it is only a modern notion, of the same age with scholastic theology. The Christian Fathers

of the Church, who were eager enough to discover in the Old Testament, proofs of a Trinity, never dreamed of seeking one in אלהים, *aleim*." The following observations on the plural termination of the Hebrew word for God, we borrow from Mr. Wellbeloved's critical remarks on Genesis. God, אלהים, *aleim*. "This appellation, in its primitive signification, denotes strength, power, ισχυρος, *ischuros*, the Mighty One. It is so natural to affix the idea of power to the Deity, that it could hardly fail to enter into some one of his appellations.—(Geddes.) In most, if not all other languages, the name of the Supreme Being is expressive of some one of his attributes. In our own, the attribute of goodness is peculiarly marked in the term God, *i. e.* the Good One."

"The most simple form of the Hebrew name of God, is אל, *al*, to which the other forms of אלה, *ale*, and אליה, *alue*, are to be traced; the additional letters being most probably abbreviations of the pronoun היא *eua*."

אלהים, *aleim*, is the plural form of אלה, *ale*, and אליה, *alue*, and in this form it most frequently occurs, but when it denotes the true God, it has strictly a singular signification. Many other words in the Jewish Scriptures, though in the plural, convey only a singular idea.—*e. g.* אדונים, *adunim*, denotes one Lord in Gen. xxiv. 9, 10, 51. xxxix. *passim*, throughout, xi. 1. 7. xlii. 30. 33. Isaiah xix. 4, and in many other places. בילים, *bolim*, denotes one owner.—Exod. xxi. 29. 36. xxii. 11. 14, 5. This term applied to an object of idolatrous worship, is used indifferently either in the singular or plural, as Hos. ii. 8. 13. הכמית, *hekemut* (plural) is put for wisdom; or, perhaps, the highest wisdom, Psalm xlix. 4; Prov. i. 20. ix. 1. joined in the two last instances with a verb in the singular number. The Hebrew words for praise, life, a face, salvation, death, fidelity, the deep, are frequently found in the plural. In the New Testament, σαββατα, *sabbata*, is used to signify a single sabbath day. And in our own language, we have such terms as *means*, *news*, &c. plural in form, but singular in signification. It is well known, that the plural number is frequently used to denote excellency and perfection." * * * * "Geddes, after Le Clerc, has accounted for this usage, thus; Before the vocation of Abraham, polytheism prevailed; *the gods*, therefore, would be a general term. The error in worship, was corrected by Abraham and Moses, yet אלהים, remained in use, but its meaning

was generally restricted to *one* God, by the agreeing verb or adjective being in the singular number." "That the plural form of this name of the Deity, was intended to denote a plurality, or a Trinity of persons in the Godhead, as some modern theologians persist in asserting, notwithstanding the solid refutation which this opinion has so frequently received, is a position which I believe was first advanced by Peter Lombard in the 12th century. He seems, indeed, only to have hinted at it. The ancient Christian Fathers, even those of them who understood Hebrew, as Origen and Jerome, never discovered a proof of the Trinity in אלהים, *aleim*. And many learned moderns, both Catholics and Protestants, have declared their full conviction, that no evidence of a plurality of persons in the Godhead can be drawn from this term. Amongst these, may be mentioned Cajetan, Petavius, and Calvin." —*Critical and Miscellaneous Remarks.*

2. Genesis i. 26. *And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness.* We need not apologise to our readers, for substituting the following excellent explication of this passage, instead of our own remarks: "The plural form, *Let us make,* &c. is here used instead of the singular, either in conformity with a usage by no means uncommon, and of which we have instances in Job xviii. 2, 3. where Job is addressed by *ye*, and Bildad speaks of himself as *we;* in Cant. i. 4, 2 Sam. xvi. 20, and some other places; or because the author really conceived of the Creator, or wished to represent him as surrounded by his angels, declaring to them his purpose, and deliberating with them on its accomplishment. In correspondence with their own conceptions, or by way of accommodation to the conceptions of mankind in general, the writers of the books of Scripture, frequently speak of the *council of God,* and represent the Governor of the world as surrounded by his ministers or courtiers, and holding consultations with them.—See 2 Kings iii. 14, 21, Job xv. 8. xxix. 4, Jer. xxiii. 17, 18. The vision of Micaiah (1 Kings xxii. 19–24) is remarkable, and throws much light on the passage before us. Here Jehovah is described as sitting in *council* on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand, and on his left, and with them deliberating who should be sent to persuade Ahab. Still more to the present purpose is the vision of Isaiah, upon his consecration to the office of Prophet,

when he saw Jehovah as described by Micaiah, and consulting with the seraphs, &c. thus: Whom shall I send, and who will go for *us*, &c. When, therefore, God is described as saying, 'Let us make man,' &c. it is to be understood as a mere figure of speech, and not to be taken literally, or as signifying 'that he spake to some beings included in his own nature and substance.'—(See Dr. Taylor's Scheme, &c. Ch. xxi.) It is observable, that in the following account of the creation of man, the singular number is employed on a similar occasion. See Ch. ii. 18. 'I will make for him a help-mate.' In one case, God is represented as deliberating with others; in the other case, with himself."—*Wellbeloved's notes on Genesis.*

The Koran lays the greatest stress on the doctrine of the Divine Unity and Supremacy; yet God is represented as speaking in the plural number. The plural form is generally used by kings, when speaking of themselves individually.

3d,—Isaiah ix. 6, *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called wonderful, counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace.* This passage is perpetually, and triumphantly urged in proof of the Deity of Christ, but how groundlessly, will, we think, appear from the following arguments: 1st, The Jews, at no period of their history, have expected a God-man to be their Messiah. The doctrine of the Trinity is most offensive to them. They look for a human deliverer invested with divine power, and consider this passage as intimating the dignity, the pre-eminence, and uncontrolled dominion of their Messiah. He acting by the power, and guided by the wisdom, of the King of kings and Lord of lords, will restore the kingdom to Israel, and reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet.

2dly, If the passage could not be satisfactorily explained on the Unitarian scheme, Trinitarians might be called upon to *prove* that it is prophetical of the Messiah. Neither Christ nor his Apostles make this application of the passage. Other passages are distinctly appropriated by them, as referring to the life and death of the Messiah, and the Christian dispensation; and many passages are quoted from the Old Testament, merely on the principle of accommodation. But it does not appear that the verse under consideration is once cited, or referred to in the New Testament.

3dly, In the opinion of some eminent Biblical critics, the Hebrew text of this passage has become corrupted. Certainly, the authors of the Greek version, the Septuagint (of which the Pentateuch was translated 280, and the other books about 170, years before Christ), must have had a copy with a reading of the Hebrew text different from the received. The translation of the Greek version is, "his name shall be called the Messenger of the great design," instead of "his name shall be called wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father."

4thly, But, if we admit the purity of the present Hebrew text, the original may be translated thus, "*his name shall be called wonderful, an excellent counsellor, powerful, the instructor of the future age, the Prince of peace.*" This translation, which is as conformable to the Hebrew idiom as the common version, entirely removes the difficulty. Even the common translation is irreconcileable with the doctrine which it is commonly adduced to support. Is it orthodox to call the Son the everlasting Father? Does the Trinitarian admit that Christ the Son of God was the eternal Father? If he allows this absurdity—which is not greater than the assertion, that David the son of Jesse, was the father of Jesse—let him cease to wonder at the doctrine of transubstantiation; let him cease to wonder at the progress of infidelity.

(To be Continued.)

On Education.—No. 2.

(Continued from page 336.)

In order to fit men for the duties and avocations of life, to constitute them agents for the diffusion of happiness amongst their species, the study of the classics (save in particular instances) does not appear to afford any assistance. That system must be, therefore, injurious, in which those studies are the chief, if not the sole, business of education.

If it is necessary for youth to cultivate mental discipline, by some course of severe study, as is asserted,* the "learned languages" do not appear to present the most useful means for the attainment of the object. Because, 1st, The

* Monthly Repository, new Series, p. 110, 111.

learned languages do not contain *all*, which it is necessary to know. 2d, The time of the student being engrossed by them, all other information is superseded; and he enters the world a learned, but not an intelligent, man. 3d, It is possible to employ boys even at an early age, upon other subjects than the classics; a knowledge of their own vernacular, could not be injurious; to be able to read and spell, is not degrading; nor to write legibly, an unpardonable offence; but these are attainments which classical students often overlook, and have to acquire, if acquired at all, after they have received the "rudiments of a sound education." 4th, We seldom see in the general business of life, that a knowledge of the languages, to obtain which, has cost such endless time and labour, is ever applied to any useful purpose, but is, generally, speedily forgotten; to substitute, then, scientific knowledge, and general information, could not but be advantageous. 5th, Physical and scientific studies, even if "thrust by the hot-bed system into a boy's head," would rivet his attention, encourage habits of assiduity and diligence, and would exercise and strengthen the thinking powers to a degree, which abstract inquiries and researches into the composition of languages, and the ramifications of words, can never elicit.

Thus, youth may be taught to think, and be provided with materials on which to exercise his faculties. Give him general imformation, introduce him to the experience of the age, to an acquaintance with the arts and sciences, to a participation in the discoveries or systems of philosophers, logicians, and politicians, and he becomes possessed of solid acquirements; his intellect becomes strong and vigorous, from repeated exercise; he acquires a clear perception and sound judgment; and although he may not be as profound a logician or mathematician, nor sufficiently skilled in philology or metaphysics, as to qualify him for a professor's chair, yet he will be qualified to enter into life, to mix with the world. He will feel conscious of the possession of what is termed common sense; be able to compare the actions of men, with the situations in which they are placed; trace those actions to their causes; recognise those latent principles through all their tortuous windings, by which men are generally impelled; and thus acquiring an insight into the human character, he will acquire a knowledge of his species, he will, consequently, acquire the means of knowing himself. Hence, his capa-

bility of correctly performing those duties, which society requires from each individual; hence, his power "to promote the happiness of his fellow-creatures."

Perhaps, it may be conceived, that there is a privileged class to whom such worldly wisdom, as that here described, would be of little use; which, by the possession of hereditary property, is removed from the common cares of life, and moving in an elevated rank, is placed above the level of every day occurrences; which, therefore, takes but little interest in the sentiments or habits of the mass of society, with which, in feelings and modes of thinking, it seldom agrees. And that the ancient system has done exceedingly well for this class, and does not exhibit any symptoms of deterioration.

But if no class exempts its members from promoting, to the utmost extent, the happiness of the human race, neither will they be exempted from that system of education calculated to produce that effect. Such studies may yet be beneath the notice of nobility; but there is a power, which if not planted, is mainly fostered and supported, by that education, of whose correctness it is a triumphant proof—a power, which but of yesterday, as it were, in its origin, already manifests such irresistible potency, that it dare not be held in derision. It is public opinion, and that opinion based upon popular improvement, will denounce ignorance, though sheltered by a ducal coronet, or covered with chivalric trappings. Eventually, therefore, the education even of these high unbending classes, will be improved, and the improvement will be beneficial to all. View the young scions of wealth and rank, who from the stations held by their families, will consequently participate in the legislation of their country, give a tone to her public proceedings, tinge her opinions, and wield that incalculable influence, which the aristocracy and gentry certainly possess: and may not the happiest results be anticipated, provided their education be founded and trained on broad enlightened principles? Suppose them, for instance, imbued with true notions of the social compact, and of the real end and design of government, of the general and inalienable rights of man, the freedom of the will and of conscience, the liberty of the subject, as distinguished from slavery on the one hand, and licentiousness on the other; suppose them to have thoroughly investigated the peculiar constitution of Great Britain, its

component parts, their several distinctions and characters, the basis of its international treaties and policy—to have gained an intimate acquaintance with the situation of the people, and the peculiarities of the various classes—to have analyzed and compared the various opposing parties, and clashing interests which are observable—and to have instituted a general inquiry into the national resources, produce, and real strength; our legislators would then understand their business; we should not be disgraced abroad by "just and necessary wars," or at home by an obsolete or contradictory, but often bloody, statute-book, by oppressive game laws, irresponsible and inefficient magistrates, and an extravagantly profuse public expenditure. Such men, their minds expanded by a general acquaintance, more or less, with the various sciences, and liberalized by the amiable influence of literature and philosophy, would produce incalculable results, by their ascendency in national councils, and their example in private circles; the condition of our country would be gradually ameliorated, and we should rapidly advance in the scale of real improvement, civilization, intellectuality.

And these remarks are generally applicable to the middle class, as it is termed, which will necessarily be an equal participator in all effected improvement. Of that class, it may, however, be averred, that it has enjoyed an education superior to any other—one which, though miserably defective, was better adapted, and more advantageous, to the respective situations and future wants of its members. Embued in common schools, with the rudiments of knowledge, the middle rank attained that moderate proficiency as a body, by after culture (occasionally affording a shining example of individual excellence), which has called forth such well-merited eulogy from every quarter. Here it is, that intellect has chiefly shone—not being, as on the one hand, enervated by luxury, or inanimate from lack of impulse; or, on the other, chilled by penury, or paralyzed by neglect: from hence, chiefly, have sprung our poets and sages, our men of science, our legislators, jurists, and philosophers. It must be allowed, however, that all this must be attributed to subsequent self-instruction; in fact, all really valuable information, beyond mere elementary principles, had to be acquired without the precincts of the school or college. The middle rank are reputed to be well-informed men. Why are they

so? Simply, because from situation, occupation, and variety of pursuits, they are obliged to mix much with one another; they are and must be active members of the community. They speedily discover that a fund of general information is requisite, even to support ordinary conversation. This, therefore, it is necessary to acquire. Books are consulted, they not being prohibited by scantiness of pecuniary resources, nor their contents interdicted by frivolity or apathy. Literary and philosophical institutions present their advantages, whilst information is easily, imperceptibly, but widely diffused, by the general intercourses of friendly unconstrained society. Hence, respectable in talent and intellect, the middle classes are, for the most part, thinkers and reasoners, not rash in forming conclusions, nor precipitate in action; and hence, the degree of honour and respect with which they are treated, as in fact, the most valuable portion of society, by whose spirit and intelligence, the glory of the nation is promoted and sustained, as giving "to science, to art, and to legislation itself, their most distinguished ornaments, and as the chief source of all that has exalted and refined human nature."

If such be the present importance of the middle class, what incalculable advantages will result to it also, by these alterations in the ancient system of education, so ably advocated at the present time!

(To be Continued.) ZACCHEUS.

The Bed of Death.

WHEN on the bed of death,
Sickness, or age, our weary frame shall lay,
And fast our fleeting breath
Its airy flight shall wing,
No power of earthly balm can then allay
The pains of conscience' sting.

A still but dreadful sound,
With magic voice, of actions past will tell,
How in the giddy round
Of Fashion's idle maze,
We stepp'd enthrall'd beneath a willing spell,
And courted Folly's blaze.

'Twill speak of wasted hours,
Of talents laid on Pleasure's glittering shrine,
Of Dissipation's bowers,
Those fruitful courts of shame,
Where falsehood, lust, intemperance, combine
To mar the virtuous name.

Cold Faith no power can boast
To calm the aching heart with guilt oppress'd;
For, on the doubtful coast
Of dark Eternity,
Vice, in her naked form, will stand confess'd,
And meet the closing eye.

'Tis conscious worth alone,
Can strew with flowers the passage to the tomb;
And while the anguish'd moan
Bursts from the heaving heart,
And racking pains the body's strength consume,
Can lull the mind to rest.

When in that awful hour,
My soul its last eternal flight shall wing,
May I, Almighty Power!
With joyful piety,
Triumphant ask of Death, "Monster—Thy sting?"
Of Grave—"Thy victory?"

H. M. B.

Objections to Unitarian Christianity.

(Continued from page 344.)

We are charged with expecting *to be saved by works, and not by grace.* This charge may easily be despatched, for a more groundless one cannot easily be imagined. We indeed attach great importance to *Christian works*, or *Christian obedience*, believing that a practice or life, conformed to the precepts and example of Jesus, is the great end for which faith in him is required, and is the great condition on which everlasting life is bestowed. We are accustomed to speak highly of the virtues and improvements of a true Christian, rejecting with abhorrence the idea, that they are no better than the outward Jewish righteousness, which the Prophet called "filthy rags;" and maintaining with the Apostle, that they are "in the sight of God, of *great price.*" We believe, that holiness or vir-

tue is the very image of God in the human soul, a ray of his brightness, the best gift which he communicates to his creatures, the highest benefit which Christ came to confer, the only important and lasting distinction between man and man. Still we always and earnestly maintain, that no human virtue, no human obedience, can give a legal claim, a right by merit, to the life and immortality brought to light by Christ. We see and mourn over the deficiencies, broken resolutions, and mixed motives of the best men. We always affirm, that God's grace, benignity, free kindness, is needed by the most advanced Christians, and that to this alone we owe the promise in the Gospel, of full remission and everlasting happiness to the penitent. None speak of mercy more constantly than we. One of our distinctions is, that we magnify this lovely attribute of the Deity. One of our strongest objections to Calvinism is, that it subverts God's grace, annihilates his forgiving goodness, by teaching that an infinite substitute is provided for guilty men, in whom their sins, instead of being pardoned, are fully and infinitely punished. So accustomed are we to insist on the infinity of God's grace and mercy, that our adversaries often charge us with forgetting his justice; and yet it is objected to us, that, renouncing grace, we appeal to justice, and build our hope on the abundance of our merit!

It is said, that we *preach morality*. To meet this objection, we beg to know what is intended by morality? Are we to understand by it, what it properly signifies, *our whole duty*, however made known to us, whether by nature or revelation? Does it mean the whole extent of those obligations which belong to us as moral beings? Does it mean that "sober, righteous, godly life," which our moral Governor has prescribed to us by his Son, as the great preparation for Heaven? If this be morality, we cheerfully plead guilty to the charge of preaching it, and of labouring chiefly and constantly to enforce it; and believing, as we do, that all the doctrines, precepts, threatenings, and promises, of the Gospel, are revealed for no other end than to make man *moral*, in this true and generous sense, we hope to continue to merit this reproach.

We fear, however, that this is not the meaning of the morality, which is said to be the burden of our preaching. Some, at least, who thus reproach us, mean, that we are

accustomed to enjoin only a *worldly* and *social morality*, consisting in common honesty, common kindness, and freedom from gross vices; neglecting to inculcate inward purity, devotion, heavenly-mindedness, and love to Jesus Christ. We hope that the persons who thus accuse us, speak from rumour, and have never heard our instructions for themselves; for the charge is false; and no one who ever sat under our ministry, can urge it, without branding himself a slanderer. The first and great commandment, which is, to love God supremely, is recognized and enforced habitually in our preaching; and our obligations to Jesus Christ, the friend who died for us, are urged, we hope, not wholly without tenderness and effect.

It is but justice, however, to observe of many, that when they reproach us with *moral preaching*, they do not mean that we teach only outward decencies, but that we do not inculcate certain favourite doctrines, which are to them the very marrow and richness of the Gospel. When such persons hear a sermon, be the subject what it may, which is not seasoned with recognitions of the Trinity, total depravity, and similar articles of faith, they call it *moral*. According to this strange and unwarrantable use of the term, we rejoice to say, that we *are* "moral preachers;" and it comforts us, that we have for our pattern, "Him who spake as never man spake," and who, in his longest discourse, has dropped not a word about a Trinity, or inborn corruption, or special and electing grace; and still more, we seriously doubt, whether our preaching could with propriety be called *moral*, did we urge these doctrines, especially the two last; for however hotly they may be defended by honest men, they seem to us to border on *immorality*—that is, to dishonour God, to weaken the sense of responsibility, to break the spirit, and to loosen the restraints on guilty passion.

(To be continued.)

Dr. Channing's Discourse, at New-York.

(Continued from page 357.)

V. Unitarianism is peculiarly favourable to piety, because it *accords with nature*, with the world around and the world within us; and through this accordance it gives aid to nature, and receives aid from it, in impressing the mind with God. We live in the midst of a glorious uni-

verse, which was meant to be a witness and preacher of the Divinity; and a revelation from God may be expected to be in harmony with this system, and to carry on a common ministry with it in lifting the soul to God. Now Unitarianism is in accordance with nature. It teaches One Father and so does creation, the more it is explored. Philosophy, in proportion as it extends its views of the universe, sees in it, more and more, a sublime and beautiful unity, and multiplies proofs, that all things have sprung from one intelligence, one power, one love. The whole outward creation, proclaims to the Unitarian the truth in which he delights. So does his own soul. But neither nature nor the soul bears one trace of Three Divine Persons. Nature is no Trinitarian. It gives not a hint, not a glimpse of a tri-personal author. Trinitarianism is a confined system, shut up in a few texts, a few written lines, where many of the wisest minds have failed to discover it. It is not inscribed on the heavens and the earth, not borne on every wind, not resounding and re-echoing through the universe. The sun and stars say nothing of a God of three persons. They all speak of the One Father whom we adore. To *our* ears, one and the same voice comes from God's word and works, a full and swelling strain, growing clearer, louder, more thrilling, as we listen, and with one blessed influence lifting up our souls to the Almighty Father.

This accordance between nature and revelation increases the power of both over the mind. Concurring as they do in one impression, they make that impression deeper. To men of reflection, the conviction of the reality of religion, is exceedingly heightened by a perception of harmony in the views of it, which they derive from various sources. Revelation is never received with so intimate a persuasion of its truth, as when it is seen to conspire to the same ends and impressions, for which all other things are made. It is no small objection to Trinitarianism, that it is an insulated doctrine, that it reveals a God whom we meet nowhere in the universe. Three Divine Persons, I repeat it, are found only in a few texts, and those so dark, that the gifted minds of Milton, Newton, and Locke, could not find them there. Nature gives them not a whisper of evidence. And can they be as real and powerful to the mind, as that One Father, whom the general strain and common voice of Scripture, and the universal voice of nature call us to adore?

VI. Unitarianism favours piety, *by opening the mind to new and ever enlarging views of God.* Teaching, as it does, the same God with nature, it leads us to seek him in nature. It does not shut us up in the written word, precious as that manifestation of the Divinity is. It considers revelation, not as independent on his other means of instruction; not as a separate agent; but as a part of the great system of God for enlightening and elevating the human soul; as intimately joined with creation and providence, and intended to concur with them; and as given to assist us in reading the volume of the universe. Thus, Unitarianism, where its genuine influence is experienced, tends to enrich and fertilize the mind; opens it to new lights, wherever they spring up; and by combining, makes more efficient, the means of religious knowledge. Trinitarianism, on the other hand, is a system which tends to confine the mind; to shut it up in what is written; to diminish its interest in the universe; and to disincline it to bright and enlarged views of God's works. This effect will be explained, in the first place, if we consider, that the peculiarities of Trinitarianism differ so much from the teachings of the universe, that he who attaches himself to the one, will be in danger of losing his interest in the other. The ideas of Three Divine Persons—of God clothing himself in flesh—of the Infinite Creator saving the guilty, by transferring their punishment to an innocent being—these ideas cannot easily be made to coalesce in the mind with that which nature gives, of One Almighty Father and Unbounded Spirit, whom no worlds can contain, and whose vicegerent in the human breast pronounces it a crime, to lay the penalties of vice on the pure and unoffending.

But Trinitarianism has a still more positive influence in shutting the mind against improving views from the universe. It tends to throw gloom over God's works. Imagining that Christ is to be exalted, by giving him an exclusive agency in enlightening and recovering mankind, it is tempted to disparage other lights and influences; and, for the purpose of magnifying his salvation, it inclines to exaggerate the darkness and desperateness of man's present condition. The mind, thus impressed, naturally leans to those views of nature and of society, which will strengthen the ideas of desolation and guilt. It is tempted to aggravate the miseries of life, and to see in them only

the marks of divine displeasure and punishing justice; and overlooks their obvious fitness and design to awaken our powers, exercise our virtues, and strengthen our social ties. In like manner, it exaggerates the sins of men, that the need of an infinite atonement may be maintained. Some of the most affecting tokens of God's love within and around us, are obscured by this gloomy theology. The glorious faculties of the soul, its high aspirations, its sensibility to the great and good in character, its sympathy with disinterested and suffering virtue, its benevolent and religious instincts, its thirst for a happiness not found on earth, these are overlooked or thrown into the shade, that they may not disturb the persuasion of man's natural corruption. Ingenuity is employed to disparage what is interesting in the human character. Whilst the bursts of passion in the new-born child are gravely urged, as indications of a native rooted corruption; its bursts of affection, its sweet smile, its innocent and inexpressible joy, its loveliness and beauty, are not listened to, though they plead more eloquently its alliance with higher natures. The sacred and tender affections of home; the unwearied watchings and cheerful sacrifices of parents; the reverential, grateful assiduity of children, smoothing an aged father's or mother's descent to the grave; woman's love, stronger than death; the friendship of brothers and sisters; the anxious affection, which tends around the bed of sickness; the subdued voice, which breathes comfort into the mourner's heart; all the endearing offices which shed a serene light through our dwellings; these are explained away by the thorough advocates of this system, so as to include no real virtue, so as to consist with a natural aversion to goodness. Even the higher efforts of disinterested benevolence, and the most unaffected expressions of piety, if not connected with what is called "the true faith," are, by the most rigid disciples of the doctrine which I oppose, resolved into the passion for distinction, or some other working of "unsanctified nature." Thus, Trinitarianism and its kindred doctrines, have a tendency to veil God's goodness, to sully his fairest works, to dim the lustre of those innocent and pure affections, which a divine breath kindles in the soul, to blight the beauty and freshness of creation, and in this way to consume the very nutriment of piety. We know, and rejoice to know, that in multitudes this tendency is counteracted by a cheerful

temperament, a benevolent nature, and a strength of gratitude, which bursts the shackles of a melancholy system. But, from the nature of the doctrine, the tendency exists and is strong; and an impartial observer will often discern it resulting in gloomy, depressing views of life and the universe.

Trinitarianism, by thus tending to exclude bright and enlarging views of the creation, seems to me not only to chill the heart, but to injure the understanding. It does not send the mind far and wide for new and elevating objects; and we have here one explanation of the barrenness and feebleness by which theological writings are so generally marked. It is not wonderful, that the prevalent theology should want vitality and enlargement of thought, for it does not accord with the perfections of God, and the spirit of the universe. It has not its root in eternal truth; but is a narrow, technical, artificial system, the fabrication of unrefined ages, and, consequently, incapable of being blended with the new lights which are spreading over the most interesting subjects, and of being incorporated with the results and anticipations of original and progressive minds. It stands apart in the mind, instead of seizing upon new truths, and converting them into its own nutriment. With few exceptions, the Trinitarian theology of the present day, is greatly deficient in freshness of thought, and in power to awaken the interest and to meet the intellectual and spiritual wants of thinking men. I see, indeed, superior minds and great minds among the adherents of the prevalent system; but they seem to me to move in chains, and to fulfil poorly their high function of adding to the wealth of the human intellect. In theological discussion, they remind me more of Samson grinding in the narrow mill of the Philistines, than of that undaunted champion achieving victories for God's people, and enlarging the bounds of their inheritance. Now, a system which has a tendency to confine the mind, and to impair its sensibility to the manifestations of God in the universe, is so far unfriendly to piety, to a bright, joyous, hopeful, ever growing love of the Creator. It tends to generate and nourish a religion, of a low, dull, melancholy tone, such, I apprehend, as now predominates in the Christian world.

VII. Unitarianism promotes piety, *by the high place which it assigns to piety in the character and work of*

Jesus Christ. What is it, which the Unitarian regards as the chief glory of the character of Christ? I answer, his filial devotion, the entireness with which he surrendered himself to the will and benevolent purposes of God. The piety of Jesus, which, on the supposition of his Supreme Divinity, is a subordinate and incongruous, is, to us, his prominent and crowning, attribute. We place his "oneness with God," not in an unintelligible unity of essence, but in unity of mind and heart, in the strength of his love, through which he renounced every separate interest, and identified himself with his Father's designs. In other words, filial piety, the consecration of his whole being to the benevolent will of his Father, this is the mild glory in which he always offers himself to our minds; and, of consequence, all our sympathies with him, all our love and veneration towards him, are so many forms of delight in a pious character, and our whole knowledge of him incites us to a like surrender of our whole nature and existence to God.

In the next place, Unitarianism teaches, that the highest work or office of Christ is to call forth and strengthen piety in the human breast, and thus it sets before us this character, as the chief acquisition and end of our being. To us, the great glory of Christ's mission consists in the power with which he "reveals the Father," and establishes the "kingdom or reign of God within" the soul. By the crown which he wears, we understand the eminence which he enjoys in the most beneficent work in the universe, that of bringing back the lost mind to the knowledge, love, and likeness of its Creator. With these views of Christ's office, nothing can seem to us so important as an enlightened and profound piety, and we are quickened to seek it, as the perfection and happiness to which nature and redemption jointly summon us.

Now, we maintain that Trinitarianism obscures and weakens these views of Christ's character and work; and this it does, by insisting perpetually on others of an incongruous, discordant nature. It diminishes the power of his piety. Making him, as it does, the Supreme Being, and placing him as an equal on his Father's throne, it turns the mind from him as the meekest worshipper of God; throws into the shade, as of very inferior worth, his self-denying obedience; and gives us other grounds for revering him, than his entire homage, his fervent love, his

cheering self-sacrifice to the Universal Parent. There is a plain incongruity in the belief of his Supreme Godhead, with the ideas of filial piety and exemplary devotion. The mind, which has been taught to regard him as of equal majesty and authority with the Father, cannot easily feel the power of his character as the affectionate son, whose meat it was to do his Father's will. The mind, accustomed to make him the Ultimate Object of worship, cannot easily recognise in him the pattern of that worship, the guide to the Most High. The characters are incongruous, and their union perplexing, so that neither exerts its full energy on the mind.

Trinitarianism also exhibits the work, as well as character of Christ, in lights less favourable to piety. It does not make the promotion of piety his chief end. It teaches, that the highest purpose of his mission was to reconcile God to man, not man to God. It teaches, that the most formidable obstacle to human happiness, lies in the claims and threatenings of divine justice. Hence, it leads men to prize Christ more, for satisfying this justice, and appeasing God's anger, than for awakening in the human soul sentiments of love towards its Father in heaven. Accordingly, multitudes seem to prize pardon more than piety, and think it a greater boon, to escape, through Christ's sufferings, the fire of hell, than to receive, through his influence, the spirit of heaven, the spirit of devotion. Is such a system propitious to a generous and ever-growing piety?

If I may be allowed a short digression, I would conclude this head with the general observation, that we deem our views of Jesus Christ more interesting than those of Trinitarianism. We feel that we should lose much, by exchanging the distinct character and mild radiance, with which he offers himself to our minds, for the confused and irreconcilable glories with which that system labours to invest him. According to Unitarianism, he is a being who may be understood, for he is one mind, one conscious nature. According to the opposite faith, he is an inconceivable compound of two most dissimilar minds, joining in one person a finite and infinite nature, a soul weak and ignorant and a soul almighty and omniscient. And is such a being a proper object for human thought and affection? I add, as another important consideration, that to us, Jesus, instead of being the second of three obscure unintelligible persons, is *first* and pre-eminent in the sphere

in which he acts, and is thus the object of a distinct attachment, which he shares with no equals or rivals. To us, he is first of the sons of God, the Son by peculiar nearness and likeness to the Father. He is first of all the ministers of God's mercy and beneficence, and through him the largest stream of bounty flows to the creation. He is first in God's favour and love, the most accepted of worshippers, the most prevalent of intercessors. In this mighty universe, framed to be a mirror of its author, we turn to Jesus as the brightest image of God, and gratefully yield him a place in our souls, second only to the Infinite Father, to whom he himself directs our supreme affection.

(To be Continued.)

To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.

Sir,

Congratulating you, as I do most sincerely, upon the progress and prospects of rational Christianity in England and Scotland, your attention, and that of your numerous friends, is solicited to the state of religion in Ireland, a country well worthy the consideration of the enlightened Christian, as well as the friend of human improvement. The resources of Ireland, both as it respects her native talent and produce, if *brought out* by adequate encouragement and just treatment, must render her a highly interesting portion of the British Empire. We trust that good things are yet in store for this hitherto much neglected country; and that more correct views in religion will be the precursors of her rise in the scale of nations.

The observations I shall now make, will be principally in reference to the North of Ireland, or Ulster. The population of the three other provinces, is, in a vast proportion, Roman Catholic. The congregations of Presbyterians in that portion of the kingdom, are very few, thinly scattered, and generally small: consisting partly of the descendants of Presbyterians from the north, who were encouraged by landed proprietors to settle there, in consequence of their industrious habits, and partly of the descendants of English Dissenters, and, in some instances, of Scottish families. At one period there were about 50 congregations; at present there are not more than the fourth of that number, and some of these, too, but lately revived by Missionaries from the General Synod of Ulster.

The causes of so many of the former congregations having lapsed into the Established Church of Ireland, and, in some few instances, into the Roman Catholic Church, may be various, and which it does not fall within our present design to consider. The mixed nature of their origin may have had its effect amongst other causes. But the congregations that have continued in being, are such as have been known to be, what is vulgarly called in this country, New Light, that is, Unitarians: or, at least, the ministers of which were so. This is *known* to be the case, notwithstanding one of the Missionaries to the south, the Minister who charged the Belfast Academical Institution with having admitted within it the Arian serpent, gravely asserted a few years ago before the General Synod, that the congregations which had *declined* were Arians, and assigned that as the cause of their declension. The Presbyterian congregations united under the Southern Association, or Synod of Munster, though small, are very respectable, in a worldly point of view. Methodists have, with their wonted zeal, made great encroachments in most places upon the congregations of the Irish Established Church; which is better known in the South of Ireland by its tithe exactions, than by the number of its adherents.

Ulster is principally inhabited by the descendants of the Scotch Presbyterians, who were encouraged to settle in it under James I. of England. They retain the Presbyterian form of Church Government, and generally the Calvinistic doctrines of the Scotch Church. There is great latitude, however, allowed with respect to doctrine, under the Synod of Ulster; hence there are amongst its members, Calvinists, Arminians, Arians, and Unitarians. Indeed, it can hardly be said that that Synod has, at present, any standard of doctrine. For, though subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith continued to be indispensable for a very long period, yet at the present day, out of fourteen Presbyteries (exclusive of the Presbytery of Antrim), of which the General Synod consists, only four make subscription to that Confession of Faith a *sine qua non;* nor are even all the members of these, Calvinists. Not, indeed, that the majority of the members of the non-subscribing Presbyteries are either Unitarians or Arminians, but because the march of liberality and respect for the rights of conscience, have been so great amongst their ministers, as to lead them to value

the Bible more than human creeds. Hence, some hope may arise of better things for the Presbyterian people of the north. Here is an advantage over the Establishment of Scotland, in which the zealous Unitarian cannot fail to rejoice.

Unfortunately the progress of information and liberality in the people generally, has not kept pace with that in the ministry. A pretty good evidence of the deficiency in respect of literary taste and information which has hitherto been prevalent amongst us, appears from the fact, that you will only in a *very few* country places (the principal exception is in the country round Belfast) find such a thing as a reading-society or book-club; much less, a library attached to a house of worship. Nor have the literary periodicals which have started from time to time in this country, been found to prosper. Neither do many of our laity, even of the middle class, or of those well-informed upon other subjects, know *clearly* the difference between Calvinism and Arminianism, nor between Old and New Light; much less, do they know one of the arguments *pro* or *con*, from their own reading. They know so far, in general (thanks to the over-officious and fiery zeal, and the abuse of some who call themselves orthodox preachers), as to attach some dreadful idea to the terms New Light, and Unitarian; and for a minister to be known, by common report, to be a New Light, or Arian, or Unitarian, is sufficient to make the great mass of the people regard him with a very suspicious eye, and keep him at bay. In short, Sir, you can hardly conceive the state of ignorance in which the *generality* of the Presbyterian laity are, with respect to doctrinal knowledge. In some parts of the county Down, and the adjoining parts of the county Antrim, Presbyterians show more than the ordinary information upon these subjects. Indeed, the county Down, has long taken the lead amongst the counties of the north, at least, in independence. The labours of Mr. Smethurst of the English Unitarian Fund, though of short continuance, appeared to be attended with beneficial results. They have set several persons of very considerable intelligence, to consider and weigh matters which were almost new to them, and have produced in their minds a conviction, that there is something highly Scriptural as well as rational in the doctrines of Unitarianism. Nor have I any doubt, that within the precincts of this very parish of Killileagh, where Mr. Smethurst met

with particular opposition from its Presbyterian minister, a very respectable Unitarian congregation could be formed, were but an adequate fostering care exercised by the British and Foreign Unitarian Association. Nothing, Sir, it appears, is so good as discussion in such a case. Our people, if circumstances have not been favourable as yet to their acquiring generally a taste for reading religious works, are very fond of hearing preachers; and, consequently, as what doctrine they hear is almost always upon one side of the question, they have too often taken up their creed at second hand.

A second cause of the backward state of liberal sentiment and information in the people, I conceive to be, the constitution of the General Synod of Ulster; which may be assimilated to Ovid's "*Concordia Discors.*" Any person who knows any thing of the materials of which that Synod is composed, and of the intolerance of some of its members, must see, that if the enlightened members of that body were to exert themselves in any great degree, for the propagation of rational and sound doctrines, it would give rise to incessant bickering, and the most violent feeling at Synods and Presbytery meetings, by which the ordinary routine of business would be prevented from proceeding smoothly. It has been the object of all parties, therefore, to study peace. Whether this be a sufficient plea, is another question. That it is right for a man, who is convinced that certain religious tenets are derogatory to the goodness, wisdom, and justice of Almighty God, even for the sake of peace (and that even not an uninterrupted and complete peace) to look quietly on, and not endeavour to disabuse the minds of his people, and of all within his influence, of such views of the Ruler of the World, is certainly more than questionable. It is pleasing to reflect, that there are some ministers at present taking a higher stand, and showing a determination that themselves and their religious sentiments shall be no longer calumniated with impunity.

As a third cause of greater progress not having been made in rational Christianity in this country, may be mentioned the receipt of the Regium Donum by ministers. In a vacant congregation, it often happens, that there are more or fewer of its members (and these generally the more respectable in worldly circumstances) Unitarians, or disposed that way, and who would desire to have a minister

of their own sentiments. The Synod, however, will not consent to a division, or the erection of a second congregation, because they would be called upon to sanction another application to Government, now become rather shy in granting the Regium Donum to new erections. The consequence is, that the minority, though perhaps as able to support a minister as the Synodical majority, are necessitated to submit, and bear as well as they can, with a minister with whose opinions they do not concur. Were they to withdraw and form themselves into a congregation, independently of the idea of being looked upon as schismatics, there would be little likelihood of their succeeding in obtaining a preacher to their mind, from amongst the licentiates of the General Synod, the only body in this country that could accommodate them. It is natural to expect, that a young man would not bind himself (for in such a case, his removal to a congregation within the pale of the General Synod is precluded,) to a congregation which has no royal bounty attached to it, and thus lose his chance of obtaining one that has.

If, therefore, there are some things which have retarded the progress of Unitarianism in the north of Ireland, yet, I trust, the prospect will always become more cheering and encouraging to those, who will undertake the task of effecting a complete and thorough reformation. The people of Ireland, naturally shrewd and intelligent, are appreciating and embracing, more and more every day, the blessings of education. Our ministers, particularly the liberal part of them, though not as yet noted for their writings, are, notwithstanding, learned and talented, and capable of effecting much, could they be roused to active exertion, to open and fearless profession of obnoxious truth. The excellent course of collegiate exercise pursued in the Belfast Academical Institution, a seminary which should be supported by every well-wisher to the improvement and progress of mind in Ireland, will have its due effect upon the ministerial capability of those educated within its walls. The utmost impartiality is observed in the language and philosophy classes, with respect to religious tenets; and, indeed, if any denomination of Christians have any thing to complain of in that college, notwithstanding the interested outcry raised by some persons about Arianism, it is the Arians themselves, for their system gets any thing but fair discussion, in the divinity class of

that establishment. But, I trust, Mr. Editor, that your Pioneer will do much to clear the way for the reception of the truth as it is in Jesus, by the people of Ireland; and that if your presence so near the University of Glasgow, is now so alarming to some of the intolerant leaders in the Synod of Ulster, who have, heretofore, been so anxious to transport our youth thither from the contagion of the Arian serpent, which has crept into the Belfast Academical Institution, you will let them feel, that a college founded even upon the insulated Craig of Ailsa, would not be out of the reach of your Pioneer's axe. Wishing you God speed, and trusting that your talented little work may be the forerunner of a plenteous harvest in the north of Ireland, I am, Sir, A. C. D. M.

Killileagh, 20th March, 1827.

THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

GLASGOW, *June* 1, 1827.

Methodist Unitarians.—OUR readers will naturally expect that the subject of the Methodist Unitarians of Lancashire, should this month be resumed and concluded. We confess that the more the matter has occupied our attention, as far as Mr. Slater and his calumnies are concerned, the more disinclined have we been to add any thing to what has already been so ably urged by Messrs. Ashworth and Howorth. No one can justly accuse us of haste, in giving judgment on this accuser of the brethren. We have given Mr. Slater ample time to manifest his contrition for his aspersions. Had he shown the slightest remorse for his cruel and ungenerous attack on departed worth, his feeble and impotent onslaught on Christian Unitarianism, would have been allowed to pass for what it is worth—nothing. But when a man insults the living and calumniates the dead, falsifies facts and brands a whole denomination, holding himself forth at the same time as a chosen vessel of God, holy and pure, truth impels us to warn the public, that the individual so offending, is deceiving and deceived, that spiritual pride has darkened his understanding, and sectarian animosity frozen the current of benevolence within him. More especially is this a duty, when the charges advanced have been rebutted, alleged state-

ments of facts proved to be apocryphal, misrepresentations detected, and calumnies exposed. If, when called on to come forward, and prove, if he can, his former statements, the assailant shrinks into his shell of safety, and skulks from the responsibility he had himself volunteered, and, instead of apologising for misapprehension or misstatement, adds insult to injury by the obloquy of his silence, it is but fitting that the memory of the righteous, fragrant as Sharon's rose, should be vindicated and honoured, and the disturber of the ashes of injured virtue be exhibited as a beacon of warning. Let not Mr. Slater imagine, that bigotry, though backed by the decisions of a self-elected Conference, is to escape with impunity. If he thought his letter was to be seen only by the faithful in Glasgow—if it was penned under the idea, that it would be read only at one of the Methodist meetings—if its boasted permission, "make what use of this letter you please," was merely a tub for the whale—if, deeming his letter would have met the public eye, he would have expressed himself differently—if he dare not say to the world what he does say in private—if, in the retired circle he would play the part of the whisperer and double-tongued, but before the world would seem to unsay his private declarations, we should think him still more culpable than we even now consider him. We have heard much of the band and class-meetings of the Methodists. We have often thought that they, as sometimes conducted, led to censoriousness, and the formation of a busy, prying, meddling interference in other people's affairs; and it would be well, we conceive, if Mr. Slater would inquire whether his disposition be not much more akin to something of this description, than to the "charity which thinketh no evil, which doth not behave itself unseemly."

Mr. Slater has averred, that the statement made in our Magazine for October, "is absolutely untrue." The evidence of facts since adduced, and which Mr. Slater has not noticed, substantiates our assertion, and places Mr. Slater in the situation he charitably designed us to occupy.

Mr. Slater affirms, respecting the Sheffield Conference and Mr. Cooke's opinions, 1805, "I remember the discussion to this day; it left an indelible impression on my mind." We sometimes are told of the second sight in Scotland, but the Rochdale minister far outvies his Highland brother, in hearing that which never took place, and

in being impressed by that which never had existence, except in his own diseased imagination.

It is said by Mr. Slater, that Mr. Cooke, at the same Conference, "solemnly engaged before us all, not to agitate the points, directly or indirectly, in the pulpit or in private, among our people." Mr. Ashworth has already settled this point most satisfactorily; but we would also ask Mr. Slater again to tax his memory, and ascertain whether the promise did not solely refer to the doctrine of Baptism, and that promise not made at the meeting named; and whether that promise was not faithfully adhered to?

Mr. Slater asserts, that, during the last sixteen years in Rochdale, "many have left the Socinians and joined the Independents and Wesleyans." On the authority of Mr. Ashworth, we state that *not one* has joined the Independents, and *only two* who *professed* to hold Unitarian sentiments, have joined the Wesleyans.

It is affirmed by Mr. Slater, when contrasting the Unitarians of Rochdale with the Methodists, that "the Socinians" "have the same obscure, small place they have had for years." The reader would suppose from this, there was but one Unitarian place of worship in Rochdale, whereas there are two, one of which was built by the very people who were formerly Methodists.

Of Newchurch, Rawtonstall, Padiham, and Oldham, Mr. Slater avers, "I know nothing." The poet has long since said, "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise," and possibly Mr. Slater may think the sentiment a good one. We do not; and, knowing also the itinerating system of the Methodists, we marvel much at Mr. Slater's professed ignorance as to these places.

The vituperation of Mr. Cooke and of his motives and preaching, in which Mr. Slater has indulged so freely, must, with all who knew the real character of the late Joseph Cooke, recoil on the defamer. It is the testimony of those who knew him best, who witnessed his devotedness to what he thought the cause of Christ, who saw his unwearied labourings for the improvement and good of men, that, with simplicity and godly sincerity, he had his conversation in the world. Mr. Cooke *was* a primitive Methodist preacher as long as he professed himself to be such. He abhorred deceit, and could not act the part his accuser has assigned to him. The fear of man he knew not, for the fear of God was before his eyes. He was

sincerely indeed attached to the Methodists, but his love of Christian Truth was greater still. And it was this love which led to his separation from that people, when every other consideration urged his continuance among them. Blessed are those whom the Truth makes free, was a feeling often happily experienced by Mr. Cooke; and, though the separation pained him grievously at first, he lived to bless his God for the circumstance, as being the means, under Providence, of empowering him to seek and fearlessly avow what seemed to him to be true, unfettered by a sectarian creed. His indefatigable exertions brought him to an early grave. He died at the age of thirty-five. Blessed is the memory of the just. He needs no monumental stone to record his virtues; his best and most durable monument may be seen in those Societies he founded and cherished; his epitaph be pronounced by those whom he led to religious inquiry, to Christian benevolence and righteousness.

From Mr. Slater's account, it might be supposed that scarcely any of the Methodists of Rochdale, and the adjoining places, had embraced Unitarianism. The conclusion he would have the reader to adopt is, that our statement in October, "is absolutely untrue," is an "absolute falsity," is "directly opposed to the most clear indisputable facts," for that, after all, merely "a few deteriorated!" With respect to Todmorden, we are not acquainted with the causes which led to the decline of the Society, but we believe that it was not from any conviction that Unitarianism was untrue. The Chapel there is not closed, though at present the Society has no regular minister. At Oldham, the tide of emigration has swept away many members of the congregation in its course, but it is now reviving under the exertions of the Rev. G. Buckland, the Missionary of the Lancashire and Cheshire Unitarian Association. We are under the mark, when we state the numbers of the other Societies as follows:—Rochdale, Clover-Street Congregation, 130; children educated, 200, and at Lanehead, 120: Rochdale, Blackwater-Street Congregation 60, children educated 60; Rawtonstall, congregation 30, children taught 100; Padiham, congregation 80, children instructed 120; Newchurch, congregation 250, children educated 250. "A few deteriorated!" We think, taking into consideration all the circumstances of the case, an unprejudiced mind would rather say, Not a few. We

have classed the respectable Society, meeting in Blackwater-Street, Rochdale, with the Methodist Unitarians, because we know that several most excellent families, who now meet there for worship, were formerly the hearers and friends of Mr. Cooke.

Our readers, we are sure, will agree with us in thinking, that it would be honouring Mr. Slater too far, to enter into an examination of his libels on the principles we profess. From them his poisoned arrows will fall pointless and powerless. Those principles he cannot appreciate, and does not understand, for he knows not what he says, nor whereof he affirms.

His defamation of the dead, and his slanders on the living, his mis-statements of fact and misapprehensions of circumstances, were forced upon our notice. Their insertion was demanded at our hands. We complied with the mandate, and have, we hope, exposed the scandal. And we now take leave of Mr. Slater with a parting advice, "Understand first, and then rebuke."

To the history of the rise and progress of the Societies we have enumerated, we would, however, again direct the attention of our readers. It will amply repay their study. The people whom that history records, as Mr. Ashworth truly and beautifully remarks in his Preface, "have now for a number of years been searching for truth. When they have relinquished a popular doctrine, it has, perhaps, uniformly been the case that some of their friends have relinquished them. When they have embraced unpopular truth, they have had also to bear a large share of obloquy, contempt, and persecution; nay, they have sometimes been shunned as infectious. This has given them more pain than they can express, and wounded their hearts more than their opposers are willing to believe. But what could they do? As honest men, they could not fly from truth, though by so doing they might fly from some pain, and embrace their friends. They had no alternative therefore, but to violate conscience and become hypocrites, or to be honest and forsaken, despised and contemned, yea condemned. The way to them was plain, though painful and rugged; and their rejoicing now, is the testimony of their conscience. They once thought themselves (such was their ignorance) the only people in the world who believed the truths contained in these Letters; they consequently looked upon themselves as friend-

less and forlorn; but they are happy to find, that in this they were mistaken. Through the good providence of God, they have found a large number of able and benevolent persons, who have shown themselves friends. This has verified to them the truth of the old proverb, "Company in distress makes the trouble less." They are consoled. They are encouraged. They would, however, be humble and teachable; and ever ready to give an answer to those who may ask them a reason of the hope that is in them, with meekness and fear."

We are sorry to be obliged to announce the resignation of the Rev. J. H. Worthington, as one of the Ministers of Cross-Street Chapel, Manchester, in consequence of severe illness.

The Belfast Auxiliary Continental Society, met on Tuesday 15th May. After waiting one hour for a sufficient number to form a meeting, Mr. George Black took the chair, the number in the room, or rather round the room, being about thirty persons. The Secretary, Mr. Thomas Houston, read the Report, which stated that the members had agreed to sink all their other differences (though some of them were on points of primary importance, being thought essential to salvation by some, and to have no reference to it at all by others) and unite in converting the Arians and Socinians of the Continent, who were, in some other part of the proceedings, classed with Infidels! After the Report, the Rules of the Society were read, and the accounts stated; from which it appeared, that 7*s.* 6*d.* had been received at one congregational collection, and that some of the ladies who had been most active as collectors, had raised sums to various amounts, of five or six shillings, and the whole sum collected was about £14. As there was no expenditure whatever on the other side of the account, this Society can boast of what few others can, a balance in hand of £14 above its annual expenditure. The Rev. Mr. Potts, Curate of Ballymacarreb, rose to move that the Report be received,—and made a speech, divided into three parts, and as many sentences: 1st, That he did not come prepared with a speech, for he came in by pure accident. 2d, That the meeting was miserably thin; and, that he thought that a bad sign of the religious state of the country. And, 3dly, that he had, while residing in the south of France, heard a preacher preach from the text, that charity covereth a multitude of sins; and assert, that almsgiving was all that was necessary to atone for sin, and secure to us Heaven. And, therefore, no one could doubt of the vast utility of this Society. The motion was seconded by a bow from the Rev. Mr. Cairns; and the Rev. R. J. Bryce resolved most satisfactorily what was so great a riddle to Mr. Potts, the great thinness of the meeting, by assuring him, that it was because there was no Jewish Wolf, nor eloquent Mrs. Fry, to excite curiosity in the town!

Surely, if these good people would think more on the saying, charity begins at home, and put forth their best exertions to reform the unsightly evils of their own land, it would be better for Ireland, and more consistent in themselves, as the avowed ministers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Unitarianism in America.—We have great plessure in giving the following extracts of a letter, from one of our friends and correspondents at New-York, dated 7th April, 1827:—Channing's Dedication Sermon has produced much excitement in this city; and, indeed, I may say, throughout this country. Unitarianism progresses in this city and throughout the country, as fast as can be expected: but orthodoxy is bold, officious, and active, and nothing is left undone to effect their object. But there is too much light, and it is too late in the day, to stop the march of mind; and the rising generation will, I am persuaded, grow up with very different views from their parents and predecessors.

The Christian Inquirer has imperceptibly become identified with *Quaker* Unitarians, a sect fast increasing, and, perhaps, the most wealthy and respectable of any in the community. They will be a valuable auxiliary to the cause of religious liberty and rational Christianity, and I conceive, that much may be calculated upon their influence. Elias Hicks is about 78 years of age, but has all the freshness of youth, and is the most influential preacher in that or any other sect in this country. He is a child of nature, has very little education or knowledge of books, but he has an extensive knowledge of men and things, and possessing a mind discriminating and powerful, accompanied with a long life of purity and uprightness, he exercises a mighty influence over the members of that sect. He has done more, in my opinion, to break down priestcraft and superstition, than any other man in this country. Many other preachers of that sect are following his track; and several are men of more education, and nearly equal talents, who will, no doubt, in some good degree, fill his place when removed.

April 26, died, after a severe and painful illness, Mr. Francis Allwood. Had this excellent and venerable man lived to the following Monday, he would have completed his 75th year. Mr. Allwood was for many years the unwearied and active Treasurer of the Unitarian Congregation in this city. He had been educated in the belief and worship of the English established church; and the first Unitarian sermon he heard preached, highly roused his feelings. But calm reflection, and serious perusal of the Bible, led him at length to embrace as truth, what he had shrunk from as heresy; and he experienced, we know, peace and joy in believing. His goodness of heart, and kind unassuming manners, and venerable appearance, insured him respect and attachment. The hoary head is a crown of glory, when found in the way of righteousness.

Mr. David Logan, formerly Unitarian Minister at Port-Glasgow and Dundee, died April 27, aged 26. Particulars in our next.

THE

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Unitarian Worthies.—No. 2, John Biddle.

Others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment—Of whom the world was not worthy.—HEBREWS.

JOHN BIDDLE was born at Wotton-under-edge, in the county of Gloucester, in the year 1615. His parents were respectable and pious. After he had received the rudiments of a good education at the Grammar School of his native town, he proceeded to the University of Oxford. Here he prosecuted his studies with so much assiduity and success, as greatly to promote his own reputation and the credit of the University. That liberal tone of thinking which led him, at a later period, to scrutinize and impugn popular errors, began to evince itself during the progress of his College studies; for we are told, that "he did so philosophise, that it might be observed he was determined more by reason than authority." This is at once the evidence and the just eulogium of an original mind; and in the days of Biddle, was a faculty as rare as it was invaluable. In 1638, he graduated B. A. and assumed the office of a tutor in the University, which he filled with singular efficiency. A short time after, he accepted an invitation to become the master of the Grammar School in the city of Gloucester, in which station, also, he acquitted himself so admirably of his duties, that parents who had the opportunity of committing their sons to his direction, congratulated themselves on their felicity.

In this situation, Mr. Biddle found leisure to follow the bent of his mind. He devoted himself with all his characteristic moral ardour, to the study of the Scriptures. These holy records, without any other aid than is afforded by purity of mind, and fervent prayer for divine illumination, and the dictates of a well disciplined understanding, he made the sole criterion and measure of his creed. This is the proper method of procedure. We fear that even men whose general principles are deserving of high respect, act erroneously in this matter. They denounce the authority of Popes, but they are enslaved by commenta-

tors. The decrees of councils, with them avail only as so much musty parchment, but the opinions of Grotius, or Priestley, or Cappe, are of paramount authority. The evils which result from this undue confidence in human judgments, are so numerous, that we cannot permit ourselves to enter upon the statement of them at present. We recommend the practice and the advice of John Biddle to all those who read a comment before they read the Bible, and who tremble to enunciate an opinion which a high or a low Dutch theologian does not sanction. "If thou, Christian Reader," says Biddle, "dost from thy heart aspire to the knowledge of God, and his son Jesus Christ, wherein eternal life doth consist, fetch not *the beginnings* thereof, either from Socinus, or from his adversaries; but closely apply thyself to the search of the New Covenant, and make no doubt but the true light will at length illuminate the eyes of thy mind." So faithfully did Mr. Biddle himself pursue this plan of investigating divine truth, that he derived all his learning in matters of religion, from the sole study of the Scriptures, with which he was so conversant, that he retained them all in his memory, word for word, not only in English, but in Greek, as far as the fourth chapter of the Revelation. The result of his Scriptural inquiries, was his disbelief in the doctrine of the Trinity. *To this conclusion he came without having seen any Unitarian publication.* This is not a solitary case. Instances might be multiplied, both of lettered and unlettered men, instances many are recorded, others that have come under the writer's own knowledge, in which the same results have attended the same process.

The truth which Mr. Biddle had discovered, he deemed it his duty to communicate. Hence he was led to propound and defend his opinions, in the course of ordinary conversation. This disclosure of his thoughts soon inflamed the minds of some zealots. The cry of heresy was raised against him, and its voice sank not till its victim was laid in his tomb. He was summoned before the magistrates; but after some considerable harassment, was permitted to retire. By no means discouraged by the interference of insane zeal, nor intimidated by the storm which he saw gathering in the distance, he adopted further measures for the dissemination of his sentiments, and put into the hands of his friends, a paper, in which he clearly and fully refuted the opinion of the Deity of the Spirit. This paper

was communicated, among others, to one who betrayed the confidence which Mr. Biddle reposed in him, and who instead of admitting the cogency, or exposing the fallacy of the arguments which it propounded, was so ungenerous as to denounce him to the Magistrates of Gloucester, and to the Committee of the Parliament that then resided there. This specimen of the fruits of Orthodox zeal, however disgraceful, is not worthy to be mentioned, if contrasted with another instance, which we shall presently adduce. In consequence, however, of this information, Mr. Biddle was committed to the common gaol. The commitment was peculiarly cruel and afflictive, for he was at the time, ill of a dangerous fever. The design of this imprisonment was to secure his person till the Parliament should take cognizance of the affair; but the severity of this proceeding was mitigated by the compassion of a friend who procured his enlargement, by giving bail for his appearance whenever the Parliament should see fit to call him to their bar. About this time, the very learned Archbishop Usher passing through Gloucester, made a vain attempt to change the opinions of Mr. Biddle. Six months after he was set at liberty, he was summoned to appear at Westminster, and the Parliament immediately chose a Committee to whom the cognizance of his cause was referred. During the space of 16 months, he was harassed and wearied by tedious and expensive delays. Seeing no probability of procuring a decision from his judges, as a body, he addressed an affecting expostulation to one of the Committee, Sir Henry Vane. The result was, that Mr. Biddle was committed to the custody of an officer of the House of Commons, and was continued under restraint for the five following years. In the mean time, the matter was referred to the Assembly of Divines, then sitting at Westminster. He now *published* his arguments against the Deity of the Spirit, with the view of exciting inquiry and eliciting truth. The publication of this tract, raised a great alarm, and it was ordered to be burned by the common hangman. In 1653, however, our author reprinted this piece, with two other tracts, and whilst he was yet in prison, he published also a Confession of Faith, in which he disproves the doctrine of the Trinity, and exposes its baneful effects.

The rancour of his enemies was now raised to a pitch beyond endurance. The Westminster Divines, instead of

applying themselves to the refutation of his sentiments, endeavoured to destroy him by an *ex post facto* law. Holding in their practice the expedient doctrine, that the end sanctifies the means, they applied to the civil power, and supplied the defect of their own intellectual insignificance, by recourse to its commanding terrors. Accordingly, they solicited the interference of the Parliament, and prevailed with it to pass an ordinance, which comprises the very essence of the mercies of Calvinism. Will the reader believe, that through their influence, the *pains* of *death*, as in case of felony, were denounced against any one who should presume to think differently from them on religious topics! Yet this was the case. In every discrepancy of opinion which they deemed material, death was the punishment: but in their great love and pity, if your heretical pravity related only to smaller matters—such as maintaining the horrible doctrine, that all men should be saved; or, that the soul sleepeth after the body is dead; or, that baptizing infants is unlawful; or, that man is bound to believe no more than his reason can comprehend,—then you were liable to imprisonment till you would give adequate surety that you would renounce any such abominable errors! The enumeration of the opinions condemned by this ordinance, is so minute, and full, and pointed, as no pretension to infallibility could make more explicit, no instrument of bigotry more vexatious, no decree of Councils, nor bull of Popes, more dogmatical and authoritative, and few more sanguinary. And as it were to put the finishing touch to this engine of ecclesiastical cruelty, the constitution of the country was violated, for the accused was allowed neither the liberty of appeal, nor the privilege of a jury! So true was the remark of Milton, that "New Presbyter, is but Old Priest writ large." This ordinance, which was but one out of several public acts that breathed the same intolerant and cruel spirit, failed to effect all that was expected from it. For the army, both officers and soldiers, were, in considerable numbers, liable to the severities of this Act, through their heretical pravity in some one or other of its proscribed doctrines. This circumstance prevented the Parliament from putting their sanguinary enactments into execution. Nor were the Parliament themselves of "one heart and one mind."

(To be Continued.)

On the Language of Scripture.

(Continued from page 371.)

We beg leave to subjoin to our remarks on Isaiah ix. 6. the following extract from the Rev. C. Wellbeloved's additional Letters to Archdeacon Wrangham, p. 129. "As the passage has been very differently rendered by different translators, from the time of the LXX. down to our own days, it becomes necessary to ascertain what is the true rendering, before we attempt to explain it; and especially, before we infer from it such a doctrine as you imagine it inculcates. For our views of the meaning of the passage will be very different, according to the version we adopt; whether that of the Jewish Targumist, '*And his name shall be called by the Wonderful in counsel, by the mighty God, by Him who endureth for ever, the Messiah, whose peace shall be multiplied upon us in his days,*' or, '*in whose days prosperity shall be multiplied upon us;*' or that of the LXX. '*And his name shall be called The Messenger of a great counsel, for I will bring peace upon the rulers, and health to him;*' or that of Grotius, '*Wonderful, Counsellor of the Mighty God, Father of the future age, Prince of Peace;*' or that of Bishop Lowth, '*Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Father of the everlasting age, the Prince of Peace;*' or that of the orthodox editor of Calmet, '*Admirable, Counsellor, Divine Interpreter, Mighty, Father of future time, Prince of Peace;*' or that of Simpson, '*Wonderful, Excellent Ruler, Mighty, Father of the future age, Peaceful Prince;*' or, to mention no more, that of Carpenter, '*Wonderful, Counsellor of God, Mighty, Father of the age, Prince of Peace.*' If any of these (excepting Lowth's) be the right version, the sense of the passage will be evidently very different from that which the common English translation seems intended to convey. I am not unreasonable, therefore, in withholding my assent to the doctrine which you would establish on the words of the Prophet, till it is determined how those words ought to be translated. But you will, no doubt, contend, that King James's translators have given us the true representation of the original; and as any new version by me, would, of course, be treated by you as 'a blunder, or a sophism,' I will consent for the present, to adopt their version of the whole verse:—'*For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon*

his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.' And from the words thus translated, you would infer, that he whose name is to be called the Mighty God, is the Mighty God himself. Then the *child that is born*, the babe that was in the womb of Mary, and in the manger at Bethlehem, was *the Mighty God!* And, *the Son that was given* (by Jehovah), was *the Everlasting Father!* Settle this matter, if you can, with pseudo-Athanasius, who warns you not to confound the persons, nor to divide the substance; 'For,' says he, 'there is one person of the Father, another of the Son;' yet Isaiah, as you say, represents the Son and the Father as the same persons. Truly, Sir, there are no obscurities, no difficulties in the orthodox system! Every thing accurately quadrates there!"

Jeremiah xxiii. 6:—*In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness.* This verse is constantly pressed into the service of orthodoxy. It is a favourite text of the *evangelical* preachers, and is, with a triumphant air, dinned into the ears of a credulous audience. But this *proof* of the Deity of Jesus, like other proofs of the same doctrine, cannot stand the test of serious and candid examination. It is easy for a man from the pulpit dogmatically to assert, that Jesus Christ was Jehovah, and to accuse those of wilful blindness, who will not assent to his exposition of the language of Scripture; but confident assertions will not always pass for sound argument, nor will sweeping denunciations long continue to foster prejudices. Though "the expressions of their sentiments are as oraculous as if they were omniscient," there is a spirit of inquiry abroad, and the godlike faculties of the human mind will be called into full exercise; and many of those who now so tamely submit to the dictation of their spiritual guides, will throw off their trammels, and judge for themselves. Had Christians impartially studied the Scriptures, they would not have tolerated the frequent introduction of the text under consideration into the pulpit, as a *proof* of the Deity of Christ.

1st, The context clearly proves, that the verse does not refer to the Messiah. We beg our readers to turn to, and consider verses 5, 6, 7, 8. We read, "In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely;" but

in Christ's days, the Jews were in subjection to the Romans, and felt their dependent state so keenly, that they were constantly devising means to throw off the yoke, and mutinying against the exactions of their oppressors. They were anxiously expecting the Messiah, to redeem Israel from their Heathen conquerors. In 40 years from the death of Christ, their frequent resistance broke forth into general rebellion. The Romans destroyed their city, burned their temple, starved, crucified, enslaved, and exposed to wild beasts, an immense multitude, and dispersed the miserable remnant over the face of the earth. Then, there was amongst them great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world, nor ever shall be. From that time, they have lived in subjection to foreign powers, and have been scattered in every part of the world. The 8th verse refers to the return of the Israelites from their Babylonish captivity. The righteous branch, who was to execute judgment and justice in the earth, is Zerubbabel, under whose conduct the Jews returned, and rebuilt their temple. To the remarks made under the 2d head, respecting Isaiah ix. 6, we refer, as equally applicable to the verse under consideration.

2dly, But, if an argument could be adduced to favour the unauthorised reference of this passage to the Messiah, and if the common translation be correct, the frequent use in Scripture of names and titles expressive of the character and office, or of any particular circumstances, of persons, would militate against the popular interpretation of the phrase "The Lord our righteousness." Jesus might, on the principles of Unitarianism, be called the Lord, or rather, Jehovah our righteousness, as he was the minister of Jehovah, and sent to preach, and lead into the way of righteousness. Moses was a God to Pharaoh, because he declared to him the will of the Supreme Being. Magistrates, princes, and judges, are also termed gods. Abiel, the son of Zeror, means in the original, God my Father. Adoniram, the name of the person who was over the tribute, means, the Lord of might. Amazial, the strength of the Lord. Daniel, judgment of God. Elijah, God the Lord. Elisha, salvation of God, or God that saves. Eliathah, my God cometh. Eliel, God my God. Emanuel, God with us. All these names, and many more of the same import, do not, in any respect, refer to the nature of the person, but to his character or office. A name, at

first given expressive of some peculiar charge or situation, continued to be used, and given to ordinary persons. Thus, Abraham, a name given to the founder of the Jewish nation, to designate that he would be the father of a great multitude, was afterwards applied, without reference to its original use, to any of his descendants. Joshua, a name appropriately given to the distinguished leader of the armies of Israel, which signifies, the Lord, the Saviour, became a common appellation.

3dly, But, although the phrase "Jehovah our righteousness" might be, according to the style of Scripture, appropriately applied to him who was a man approved of God, by miracles and signs which God did by him, yet the passage under consideration, does not refer to Christ, nor is it properly translated in our common version. We shall give the translation of Blaney, and his remarks upon it:—"*And this is the name by which Jehovah shall call him, Our Righteousness.* I doubt not, but some persons will be offended with me, for depriving them by this translation, of a favourite argument for proving the divinity of our Saviour, from the Old Testament. But I cannot help it. I have done it with no ill design, but purely because I think, and am morally sure, that the text as it stands, will not properly admit of any other construction. The LXX. (the Greek version, called the Septuagint,) have so translated before me, in an age when there could not possibly be any bias of prejudice either for, or against, the before mentioned doctrine, a doctrine which draws its decisive proofs from the New Testament only. In the parallel passage, chap. xxxiii. 16. the expression is a little varied, but the sense, according to a just and literal translation, is precisely the same; *And this is he whom Jehovah shall call, Our Righteousness.*"

(To be Continued.)

To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.

SIR,

I HAVE learned from the public prints, that the Committee of the General Assembly has petitioned Parliament against any alteration in the present Corn Laws; and, that the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland has sanctioned the illiberal policy of its deputies. During the discussion, respecting the propriety of this

appeal to the Legislature, some of the members of the Assembly, manifested towards those who have censured their petition, a degree of asperity, ill concealed under the mask of contempt, not very becoming those who preach the Christian law of benevolence. The following remarks are the result of as dispassionate a view of the question as I am able to take. I wish neither to extenuate nor to set down ought in malice. The present restrictions respecting the importation of grain, render the price of the staff of life too exorbitant for the plentiful supply of the population. They enable the landed proprietor to make an extravagant demand for the most wholesome article of food, and, what is still more pernicious, render the comfort, the health, almost the very existence, of the most numerous portion of the community, dependent on the avarice and cupidity of a few gamblers and reckless speculators. Those who have taken a comprehensive view of the subject, are of opinion, that an abandonment, or at least a considerable abatement, of the present restrictive Corn Laws, would not deteriorate the interests of the landholders, whilst it would materially benefit all other classes, and be of incalculable advantage to our operatives.

Bread strengtheneth man's heart; but a sufficient supply of this most nutritious, and generally palatable diet, is, according to the present system, often beyond the means of the labouring class, and especially of that portion, who have a large and increasing family, crying out perpetually, Give, give. The established clergy of Scotland know full well the distresses which the population of Scotland have of late endured; they know that multitudes have not been able to procure a proper supply of bread; and they know, that the deprivations which they have suffered, are in no small degree to be attributed to the present restrictive Corn Laws, which, apparently, benefit one portion of the state, at the expense of another—the most useful—the most necessary. But the established clergy, imagining that a plentiful supply of the staff of life would diminish the profits of their lands—that "their rank, and mellow glebes fertile of corn," would not yield them the same lucrative return, if the poor were liberally supplied with bread, petition Parliament to prevent the introduction of foreign corn, or, in other words, to keep up the high prices of the staff of life, and thus deprive the poor of an adequate supply. The principle of the petition

is, that the poor may starve in order that the clergy may enjoy the comforts and luxuries of life. The Scotch clergy cannot apprehend any serious inconvenience which ever way the Parliament should decide; in their own apprehension, they might be losers to the amount of a few pounds a-year, but they are placed above all chance of losing the comforts or the luxuries of the world, by the removal of the present restrictions. No body of clergy is so comfortably and amply remunerated, as that of the Church of Scotland. Though none enjoy livings equivalent to some of the English bishoprics, yet their livings are much less unequally divided; and none, we believe, have an income amounting to less than £200 a-year, whilst the benefices of some nearly approach £1000 per annum. Parliament amply supplies the deficiencies of Scotch glebes.

The established clergy are, indeed, wholly without excuse for their petition for the continuation of the present restrictions. Had they deemed it proper to interfere with the deliberations of Parliament on this subject, one might reasonably expect, that their address would have been in behalf of poverty—that their voices would have been raised to befriend those who have few to help them, and who are sometimes unable to procure the necessaries of life. Had the Scotch clergy come before Parliament on this question, they should have appeared as the earnest advocates of a starving population, and have implored the Legislature to take compassion on those, whose honest industry could scarcely enable them to keep life and soul together. They should have urged, In the discharge of our pastoral duties, our steps are often conducted to the roof of sordid poverty; we enter miserable dwellings which do but ill defend the squalid inhabitants from the inclemencies of winter; and we behold faces lean and wasted, from a scanty and unwholesome diet—"Meagre and lank from fasting grown." Oh! have compassion upon the poor. We cheerfully risk the sacrifice of a small part of our income, that they may be satisfied with bread. At *this time*, the voice of distress is heard in our land; and we cannot, we dare not—as we value our reputation, as we value the usefulness of our ministerial services, as we value the testimony of our consciences, and the approbation of him who came not to be ministered unto but to minister—we dare not, by petitioning you to protect

the glebes of us on whom you yearly lavish an abundant supply, consult what we believe to be our pecuniary interests, to the manifest injury and plunder of a numerous, an honest, an industrious, but distressed population. We have all the comforts, and through your bounty, the luxuries of life; and we pray, that you will provide that our markets be plentifully and cheaply supplied with corn.

But, alas! Parliament was addressed in a very different strain, and in a spirit directly opposed to this. The prayer of the petition amounted to this: That Parliament would protect their glebes, keep up and increase the price of bread, and benefit the petitioners at the expense of the people. Not satisfied with their comfortable manses, with their rich glebes, with their parliamentary grants, and other sources of emolument, they would enhance the value of their own property, at the expense of those who cannot obtain a sufficiency of the necessaries of life! I need not express the sense which I entertain of the gross, the low-minded selfishness, of this anti-corn petition; for I can scarcely find language sufficiently strong, to declare my abhorrence of the principle by which it was dictated. But I know, that if the Unitarians had, as a body, been guilty of a similar act of selfishness, their principles, their characters, would have been stigmatized in no measured epithets. They would have been held up to scorn and contempt; they would have been characterised as shepherds more anxious to fleece their flock, than to minister to their wants. Many of those terms, and much of that spirit, which have been exhibited in the Edinburgh Christian Instructor on the Apocrypha Question, would have been transferred to condemn the conduct of the *heretics;* and they would have merited it all, had they so far neglected the dictates of benevolence, or acted so directly in opposition to the spirit of Christianity.

This instance of pure selfishness will not be soon wiped away from the minds of the poor lay members of the Church of Scotland, nor from the more tenacious memories of the *Sectaries.* Years of preaching will be requisite to reinstate the petitioning clergy, in the good graces of their poor auditors, and incalculable injury will be done to the cause of religion, by thus shaking the confidence of the people in the character of their spiritual guides. Persons will reluctantly receive the bread of life from those who have endeavoured to deprive them of a

plentiful supply of natural sustenance. Like the poor man in the fable, they will not receive the costless blessing of him who will make no personal sacrifice in their behalf. The Edinburgh Christian Instructor lately contained some severe remarks on the *Sectaries*. The covenanting Church of Scotland, which is but of yesterday, talk of *Sectaries!*—"Risum teneatis, amici." The petition which they have lately sent to Parliament, will open the eyes of men, and certainly will not diminish the number of Sectaries. Dissenters will rapidly increase, when the Church clergy manifest an utter indifference to the interests of the community, and show that they are more anxious to promote their own than their people's welfare.

The Church of Scotland has petitioned Parliament in favour of monopoly; it has petitioned Parliament in behalf of religious intolerance, against Catholic emancipation; but we do not find, that it has ever petitioned Parliament against ruinous and demoralizing wars—that it has petitioned Parliament against bribery and corruption—or has expressed any concern in behalf of civil and religious liberty. The established clergy of Scotland have ever been the tame and passive instruments of the Powers that be, except where their own interests seemed to be directly implicated.—I am, Sir, yours,

Annonæ Vilitas.

Dr. Channing's Discourse, at New-York.

(Continued from page 385.)

VIII. I now proceed to a great topic. Unitarianism promotes piety, *by meeting the wants of man as a sinner.* The wants of the sinner may be expressed almost in one word. He wants assurances of mercy in his Creator. He wants pledges, that God is Love in its purest form, that is, that He has a goodness so disinterested, free, full, strong, and immutable, that the ingratitude and disobedience of his creatures cannot overcome it. This unconquerable love, which in Scripture is denominated grace, and which waits not for merit to call it forth, but flows out to the most guilty, is the sinner's only hope, and is fitted to call forth the most devoted gratitude. Now this grace or mercy of God, which seeks the lost, and receives and blesses the returning child, is proclaimed by that faith,

which we advocate, with a clearness and energy, which cannot be surpassed. Unitarianism will not listen for a moment to the common errors, by which this bright attribute is obscured. It will not hear of a vindictive wrath in God, which must be quenched by blood; or of a justice, which binds his mercy with an iron chain, until its demands are satisfied to the full. It will not hear that God needs any foreign influence to awaken his mercy; but teaches, that the yearnings of the tenderest human parent towards a lost child, are but a faint image of God's deep and overflowing compassion towards erring man. This essential and unchangeable propensity of the divine mind to forgiveness, the Unitarian beholds shining forth through the whole Word of God, and especially in the mission and revelation of Jesus Christ, who lived and died to make manifest the inexhaustible plenitude of divine grace; and, aided by revelation, he sees this attribute of God every where, both around him and within him. He sees it in the sun which shines, and the rain which descends, on the evil and unthankful; in the peace, which returns to the mind in proportion to its return to God and duty; in the sentiment of compassion, which springs up spontaneously in the human breast towards the fallen and lost; and in the moral instinct, which teaches us to cherish this compassion as a sacred principle, as an emanation of God's infinite love. In truth, Unitarianism asserts so strongly the mercy of God, that the reproach thrown upon it is, that it takes from the sinner the dread of punishment; a reproach wholly without foundation; for our system teaches, that God's mercy is not an instinctive tenderness, which cannot inflict pain; but an all-wise love, which desires the true and lasting good of its object, and consequently desires first for the sinner that restoration to purity, without which, shame, and suffering, and exile from God and Heaven are of necessity and unalterably his doom. Thus Unitarianism holds forth God's grace and forgiving goodness most resplendently; and by this manifestation of him, it tends to awaken a tender and confiding piety; an ingenuous love, which mourns that it has offended; an ingenuous aversion to sin, not because sin brings punishment, but because it separates the mind from this merciful Father.

Now we object to Trinitarianism, that it obscures, if it does not annul, the mercy of God. It does so in various ways. We have already seen, that it gives such views of

God's government, that we can hardly conceive of this attribute as entering into his character. Mercy to the sinner is the principle of love or benevolence in its highest form; and surely this cannot be expected from a being who brings us into existence burdened with hereditary guilt, and who threatens with endless punishment and woe, the heirs of so frail and feeble a nature. With such a Creator, the idea of mercy cannot coalesce; and I will say more, that under such a government man has no need of mercy; for he owes no allegiance to such a Maker, and cannot, of course, contract the guilt of violating it; and without guilt, he needs no grace or pardon. The severity of this system places him on the ground of an injured being. The wrong lies on the side of the Creator.

In the next place, Trinitarianism obscures God's mercy, by the manner in which it supposes pardon to be communicated. It teaches, that God remits the punishment of the offender, in consequence of receiving an equivalent from an innocent person; that the sufferings of the sinner are removed by a full satisfaction made to divine justice in the sufferings of a substitute. And is this "the quality of mercy?" What means forgiveness, but the reception of the returning child through the strength of parental love? This doctrine invests the Saviour with a claim of *merit*, with a *right* to the remission of the sins of his followers; and represents God's reception of the penitent as a recompense *due* to the worth of his Son. And is mercy, which means free and undeserved love, made more manifest, more resplendent, by the introduction of merit and right as the ground of our salvation? Could a surer expedient be invented for obscuring its freeness, and for turning the sinner's gratitude from the sovereign who demands, to the sufferer who offers, full satisfaction for his guilt?

I know it is said, that Trinitarianism magnifies God's mercy, because it teaches, that he himself provided the substitute for the guilty. But I reply, that the work here ascribed to mercy, is not the most appropriate, nor most fitted to manifess it and impress it on the heart. This may be made apparent by familiar illustrations. Suppose that a creditor, through compassion to certain debtors, should persuade a benevolent and opulent man, to pay him in their stead. Would not the debtors see a greater mercy, and feel a weightier obligation, if they were to receive a free, gratuitous release? And will not their chief

gratitude stray beyond the creditor to the benevolent substitute? Or suppose, that a parent, unwilling to inflict a penalty on a disobedient but feeble child, should persuade a stronger child to bear it. Would not the offender see a more touching mercy in a free forgiveness, springing immediately from a parent's heart, than in this circuitous remission? And will he not be tempted to turn with his strongest love to the generous sufferer? In this process of substitution, of which Trinitarianism boasts so loudly, the mercy of God becomes complicated with the rights and merits of the substitute, and is a more distant cause than these in our salvation. These are nearer, more visible, and more than divide the glory with grace and mercy in our rescue. They turn the mind from mercy as the *only* spring of its happiness, and *only* rock of its hope. Now this is to deprive piety of one of its chief means of growth and joy. Nothing should stand between the soul and God's mercy. Nothing should share with mercy the work of our salvation. Christ's intercession should ever be regarded as an application to love and mercy, not as a demand of justice, not as a claim of merit. I grieve to say, that Christ, as now viewed by multitudes, hides the lustre of that very attribute, which it is his great purpose to display. I fear, that to many, Jesus wears the glory of a more winning, tender mercy, than his Father; and that he is regarded as the sinner's chief resource. Is this the way to invigorate piety?

Trinitarians imagine, that there is one view of their system, peculiarly fitted to give peace and hope to the sinner, and consequently to promote gratitude and love. It is this. They say, it provides an *infinite* Substitute for the sinner, than which nothing can give greater relief to the burdened conscience. Jesus, being the second person of the Trinity, was able to make infinite satisfaction for sin; and what, they ask, in Unitarianism, can compare with this? I have time only for two brief replies. And first, this doctrine of an infinite satisfaction, or, as it is improperly called, of an infinite atonement, subverts, instead of building up hope, because it argues infinite severity in the government which requires it. Did I believe, what Trinitarianism teaches, that not the least transgression, not even the first sin of the dawning mind of the child, could be remitted without an infinite expiation, I should feel myself living under a legislation unspeakably dreadful,

under laws written like Draco's, in blood; and, instead of thanking the Sovereign for providing an infinite substitute, I should shudder at the attributes, which render this expedient necessary. It is commonly said, that an infinite atonement is needed to make due and deep impressions of the evil of sin. But he, who framed all souls and gave them their susceptibilities, ought not to be thought so wanting in goodness and wisdom, as to have constituted a universe, which demands so dreadful and degrading a method of enforcing obedience, as the penal sufferings of a God. This doctrine of an infinite Substitute, suffering the penalty of sin, to manifest God's wrath against sin, and thus to support his government, is, I fear, so familiar to us all, that its monstrous character is overlooked. Let me then set it before you, in new terms, and by a new illustration; and if, in so doing, I may wound the feelings of some who hear me, I beg them to believe, that I do it with pain, and from no impulse but a desire to serve the cause of truth. Suppose, then, that a teacher should come among you, and should tell you, that the Creator, in order to pardon his own children, had erected a gallows in the centre of the universe, and had publicly executed upon it, in room of the offenders, an Infinite Being, the partaker of his own Supreme Divinity; suppose him to declare, that this execution was appointed, as a most conspicuous and terrible manifestation of God's justice and wrath, and of the infinite woe denounced by his law; and suppose him to add, that all beings in heaven and earth are required to fix their eyes on this fearful sight, as the most powerful enforcement of obedience and virtue. Would you not tell him, that he calumniated his Maker? Would you not say to him, that this central gallows threw gloom over the universe—that the spirit of a government, whose very acts of pardon were written in such blood, was terror, not paternal love—and that the obedience, which needed to be upheld by this horrid spectacle, was nothing worth? Would you not say to him, that even you, in this infancy and imperfection of your being, were capable of being wrought upon by nobler motives, and of hating sin through more generous views; and that much more the angels, those pure flames of love, need not the gallows and an executed God, to confirm their loyalty? You would all so feel at such teaching as I have supposed; and yet how does this differ from the popular doctrine

of atonement? According to this doctrine, we have an Infinite Being sentenced to suffer as a substitute the death of the cross, a punishment more ignominious and agonizing than the gallows, a punishment reserved for slaves and the vilest malefactors; and he suffers this punishment, that he may show forth the terrors of God's law, and strike a dread of sin through the universe! I am indeed aware that multitudes, who profess this doctrine, are not accustomed to bring it to their minds distinctly in this light; that they do not ordinarily regard the death of Christ, as a criminal execution, as an infinitely dreadful infliction of justice, as intended to show, that, without an infinite satisfaction, they must hope nothing from God. Their minds turn by a generous instinct from these appalling views, to the love, the disinterestedness, the moral grandeur and beauty of the sufferer; and through such thoughts they make the cross a source of peace, gratitude, love, and hope; thus affording a delightful exemplification of the power of the human mind to attach itself to what is good and purifying in the most irrational system. But let none on this account say, that we misrepresent the doctrine of atonement, the primary and essential idea of which is, *the public execution of a God*, for the purpose of satisfying justice and awakening a shuddering dread of sin.

I have a second objection to this doctrine of infinite atonement. When examined minutely, and freed from ambiguous language, it vanishes into air. It is wholly delusion. The Trinitarian tells me, that, according to his system, we have an infinite Substitute; that the Infinite God was pleased to bear our punishment, and, consequently, that pardon is made sure! But I ask him, Do I understand you? Do you mean that the Great God, who never changes, whose happiness is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever—that this Eternal Being, really bore the penalty of my sins—*really suffered and died?* Every pious man, when pressed by this question, answers, No. What then does the doctrine of infinite atonement mean? Why, this; that God took into union with himself our nature, that is, a human body and soul; and *these* bore the suffering for our sins; and, through his union with these, God *may be said* to have borne it himself! Thus this vaunted system goes out—in words. The infinite victim proves to be a frail man, and God's share in the sacrifice is a mere fiction. I ask with solemnity, Can

this doctrine give one moment's ease to the conscience of an unbiassed, thinking man? Does it not unsettle all hope, by making the whole religion suspicious and unsure? I am compelled to say, that I see in it no impression of majesty, or wisdom, or love, nothing worthy of a God; and when I compare it with that nobler faith, which directs our eyes and hearts to God's essential mercy, as our only hope, I am amazed that any should ascribe to it superior efficacy, as a religion for sinners, as a means of filling the soul with pious trust and love. I know, indeed, that some will say, that, in giving up an infinite atonement, I deprive myself of all hope of divine favour. To such, I would say, You do infinite wrong to God's mercy. On that mercy I cast myself without a fear. I indeed desire Christ to intercede for me. I regard his relation to me as God's kindest appointment. Through him, "grace and truth come" to me from Heaven, and I look forward to his friendship, as among the highest blessings of my whole future being. But I cannot, and dare not ask him, to offer an infinite satisfaction for my sins; to appease the wrath of God; to reconcile the Universal Father to his own offspring; to open to me those arms of Divine Mercy, which have encircled and borne me from the first moment of my being. The essential and unbounded mercy of my Creator is the foundation of my hope, and a broader and surer the universe cannot give me.

(To be Continued.)

REVIEW.

"*The pure Humanity of Christ shown to be a Scriptural doctrine; its gradual corruption traced during the times of the Apostles, and until the completion of the present generally received doctrines of the Trinity, in the year* 863; *A Discourse, by Russell Scott, Minister of the High-Street Chapel, Portsmouth.*"

THE cause of Unitarian Christianity is greatly indebted to the author of the tract, whose title we have put at the head of this notice. He has devoted a long life to the promotion of its interests. His exertions have been crowned with success. He has ever been among the first to adopt every plan which promised to advance pure Christianity, and vital religion; his pen has again and

again been employed—his purse has ever been open—and from himself, and through his medium, large sums have flowed—his tongue has discoursed, and does still discourse, most eloquently, to further the cause of Scriptural truth, and Evangelical practice. He now rejoices in the fruits of his exertions—surrounded by a society, nearly all of whom are his children in the Lord—numerous—respectable—attached to their Pastor by feelings of affection and reverence; not only so, his works are preaching, whilst he is enjoying necessary repose; and wherever they come in their extensive travel, they illuminate and console, by their perspicuity, their cogent argumentation, their exhibition of invaluable, and consolatory, and elevating sentiments.

The work before us, is one of the most useful of Mr. Scott's productions. Priestley had well, before him, traced the gradual corruption of the Christian doctrine; but his work, from its price, was accessible to comparatively few. Besides, it omitted much that might, and ought, to have been inserted. Mr. Scott presents us in a cheap form, a condensation of Dr. Priestley's argument, combined with whatever else was necessary, drawn from his own extensive reading, and from other good authorities. We heartily wish the work a wide circulation, because it is calculated to do much service to the good cause. When the doctrine of the Supremacy of the Father is brought before a Trinitarian, and he perceives the cogency of the evidence adduced in its favour, one of the first inquiries that he makes, is, "How then came the Trinity?" Because, it has existed for ages, many imagine that it existed from the first; and a portion of that veneration, which too generally attaches itself to whatever is ancient, surrounds the doctrine. Mr. Scott's work gives a most clear and satisfactory reply to the question, "How came the Trinity?"—proves to demonstration, that it did not exist from the first, and scatters the elements of absurd veneration, by exhibiting the origin of it to be heathenism—its march to be gradual—now slow—now rapid—now advancing—now retrograding—accompanied by persecution and bloodshed—the deprivation of the rights of man, and the aggrandisement of the priest.

The corrupters of the Scriptural doctrine respecting the person of Christ, were first, he argues, the Gnostic philosophers. We are not sure that we can quite agree with Mr. Scott in all his remarks under this head, because

we do not think it can be proved, that Gnosticism existed as *a system* so early as Mr. Scott represents. The first elements of it may, indeed, be found in the first century of the Christian era; but we much doubt, notwithstanding the authority of Priestley and Hammond, if Gnosticism reduced into a system, and having "philosophers," was not the work of a later period. Whatever doubt may attach, however, to the influence of the Gnostic philosophers in the time of the Apostles, it is certain, that afterward they *did* impair the purity of the Christian doctrine. Equally certain is it, as Mr. Scott goes on to state, that the next corrupters of the Apostolic doctrine were the Platonic philosophers. The chief of them is *Justin Martyr* (A. D. 140); he was entirely engrossed by the Platonic philosophy before he became a Christian; and he applied the principles of that philosophy, to enhance the personal dignity of the Messiah, by promulgating as a doctrine, *first revealed* to himself, and *first taught* by him, the pre-existence of "Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph," (John i. 45). As a Platonic philosopher, he believed in *the pre-existence of all souls;* can we be surprised that he did not exclude that of Jesus? *Clement* of Alexandria (A. D. 195), avowedly mixed the Platonic and Stoic tenets with the Christian doctrine; the same may be said of *Tertullian* (A. D. 200). And *Origen* also (A. D. 230) avowed his determination to *improve* Christianity, by incorporating with it the principles of heathen philosophy. *Novatus* (250) composed the first treatise on the subject of the Trinity. His Trinity, however, was very dissimilar to ours; for in it, the Son was greatly inferior to the Father, and the Holy Ghost to the Son.

The Councils now begin to exert their deteriorating influence on Christianity; and first, *that of Antioch* (270). In this Council, it was proposed to decree, that Jesus was to be held of the same essence with the Father: the proposition, however, was rejected by a very large majority. But the Council of *Nice* (325) reversed the judgment; and by the aid of the civil power, and after much cabal, and overreaching, and strife, determined the doctrine to be true!

In its turn, the judgment of the Council of Nice was modified by that of Sardis (347); and at *Sirmium* (351), the *Nicene* doctrine of Christ being of the same essence with the Father was set aside, and the Father was declared to be *greater* than the Son. Hitherto, the Holy Ghost had been regarded, not as a person distinct from the Father

and the Son, but as a divine energy. This opinion was denounced by the Council at *Alexandria* (362), and the Holy Ghost decreed to be consubstantial with the Father and the Son. And at Constantinople (381), the Emperor of Rome caused to be proclaimed, the equal Deity of the Holy Ghost with the Father and the Son! At Ephesus (431), the subject of the twofold nature of Christ, was first mooted. The unity of Christ's nature was unanimously decreed, and the Virgin Mary was honoured as a *supplement* to the Trinity, under the appellation of the Mother of God! But three years afterward, by intrigue and turpitude, it was at length voted, that Christ is *one hypostasis* in which are *two natures!*

But at Ephesus (449), the doctrine of the two natures was denounced as *heresy;* and a wish was expressed, "That those who *divide* Christ, may be *divided by the sword, may be hewn in pieces, and burnt alive.*" For the subsequent additions to the Trinity, we are indebted to two Popes. Leo, the Roman Pontiff (451), ordered the unity of Christ to be anathematized, and the doctrine of the two natures to be adopted. This was met by great opposition; and the commotion was assuaged only by the interposition of the Emperor, in favour of the Pope. Pope Nicholas I. (863) considered the doctrines of the Trinity still to be *incomplete*—that they wanted "the finishing touch," as Mosheim expresses it. He made the Holy Ghost to proceed *from the Son*, as well as from the Father. The Eastern or Greek church never received this doctrine of Nicholas; hence it is, that the Greek Trinity is *less complete* than that of the Roman and Lutheran.

Such is a mere outline of Mr. Scott's argument. Our end will have been answered, if by it we have awakened in our readers the desire to peruse the work itself. Their labour will be amply repaid: for we have seen few books that contain so much in a little compass—so much condensation, yet so much perspicuity—so much information, yet so small a charge. G. C. S.

Keppel's Travels from India to England, by Bassorah, Bagdad, the Ruins of Babylon, &c. 2 vol. 8vo.

The chief object we have in view in noticing these very interesting volumes, is to extract from them a variety of scattered remarks illustrative of Scripture. Narratives of

travels generally abound with curious and engaging incidents and anecdotes. In this respect, these volumes are not deficient. But whilst we leave the details of these to other reviewers, we shall hardly be able to prevail on ourselves to pass over one or two quotations which may not bear a strictly theological character.

We shall premise, that in January 1824, the Hon. G. Keppel, son of the Earl of Albemarle, set out from Bombay in company with some friends, with the intention of returning to England by land. They were transported as far as Bassorah, situated at the top of the Persian Gulf, in His Majesty's frigate, Alligator. Thence the party set out to traverse the extent of country lying between the Persian Gulf on the south, to the Caspian Sea and St. Petersburgh. This line of country led them to visit many spots which are sacred in the mind of the Biblical Christian.

At Mascat, Captain Keppel gives us the following account of a visit he paid to the slave-auction:—"In visiting the slave-auction, I felt almost angry with myself, for not experiencing more disgust at witnessing so disgraceful and unnatural a traffic. The market was held in an open space near the landing-place. Some twenty or thirty fat little negresses from twelve to fourteen years of age, having their woolly locks neatly plaited, and their bodies well oiled, to give them a sleek appearance, were ranged in two rows on some logs of timber. Too young to trouble themselves with their degraded state, they sat giggling and chattering with the utmost nonchalance. Our uniforms appeared to afford them much merriment. One dingy little coquette, by significantly pointing to us, set the rest in a roar of laughter. In the meantime, the slave-merchant was leading by the hand one of the party, and calling out her price: as for herself, she seemed more intent to catch the jokes of her companions, than to ascertain any thing respecting her future destiny." How mournful thus to see the gaiety and light-heartedness of youth in such a guise! and how dreary a scene does the mind contemplate, reserved for these now joyous creatures, when the lash and continuous labour shall have extinguished their hilarity!

Extreme difficulty has been felt by geographers to determine the site of Paradise, and Mr. Wellbeloved does not hesitate to affirm, that "all inquiries respecting the situation of Eden and Paradise, or the Garden, must be fruitless." Common opinion, however, places it in the

country in which the Tigris and Euphrates rise. Captain Keppel's road lay this way, and he makes the following observations on the subject. "We landed in the afternoon to shoot, and walked several miles; the ground was very wet, and the state of vegetation indicated little fertility. This destitute place, which is called Il Jezeerah (the Island), is generally held to be the seat of Paradise. If such be the case, it certainly is not what the garden of our first parents is described to have been. Only a few shrubs have been visible since we left the vicinity of Koorna. The whole country is a dead flat; and so much flooded in many parts, that we could hardly pass through it. The few dry patches of soil were covered with salt. If the present barren appearance of this spot be the only reason for rejecting it as the site of Paradise, the same objection would apply to the surrounding district, which, though now a sandy desart, has been celebrated for the richness of its soil. Pliny calls it the most fertile of the east (solum orientis fertilissimum); and who does not remember the vivid descriptions in the Arabian Nights, of the delightful gardens of Bagdad and Balsora?" The following story illustrates the univeral custom in the East, of receiving presents, and may serve to throw some light perhaps on an incident in Scripture of which unbelievers have availed themselves—the spoiling of the Egyptians by the children of Israel, when they were about to leave Egypt. The incident will show, that spoil may be made, that is, presents asked and even exacted, without implying in the minds of Easterns, any ideas of improbity:—"Half an hour before sunset, we arrived at a village of wandering Arabs. One of the men, a wild-looking savage, on seeing us approach, ran forward in a frantic manner, and throwing down his turban at our feet, fiercely demanded, *Bunis* (a present). He was made to replace his turban, but continued screaming as if distracted." He continues, "The scene to us was of the most lively description. Around us, as far as the eye could reach, was a trackless desart; to our left, was the rude village of the Wanderers, and immediately in the foreground were their primitive inhabitants, unchanged probably in dress, customs, or language, since the time of the 'wild man' Ishmael, their ancestor." The immutability of Eastern customs it is, which renders us able to explain and verify the past by the present, and which gives so great a value to travels into the East.

Our author proceeds to detail the manner in which the Arab lies in ambush to waylay the traveller; and hence illustrates a passage of Jeremiah, in his denunciations against the wickedness of Judah: "In the ways hast thou sat for them, as the Arabian in the wilderness." Jer. iii. 2.

The tents of the Illayt Arabs, he informs us, are black, probably of the same description as those of their earliest ancestors. "We have a curious illustration of this, in the Song of Solomon, where the bride compares the blackness of her complexion to the tents of Kedar. 'I am *black*, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, the curtains of Solomon.'" Chap. i. 5.

Speaking of the plain in which Babylon stood, he observes,—"We reached the statue of which we were in search, after a ride of five miles, through a country strewed with fragments of ruined buildings. As far as the eye could reach, the horizon presented a broken line of mounds; the whole of this place was a desart flat; the only vegetation was a small prickly shrub, thinly scattered over the plain, and some patches of grass where the water had lodged in pools, occupied by immense flocks of bitterns: so literally has the prophecy of Isaiah been fulfilled, respecting devoted Babylon, that it should be swept with the besom of destruction; that it should be made 'a possession for the bittern, and pools of water.'" Again, speaking of the ruins of Babylon, "The divine predictions against Babylon have been so literally fulfilled in the appearance of the ruins, that I am disposed to give the fullest signification to the words of Jeremiah, that 'the broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken.'"

(To be Continued.)

THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

GLASGOW, *June* 30, 1827.

WE are glad to see, that the Unitarian Marriage Bill has passed the House of Commons. Whether the opponents of human improvement, in the other House, will be strong enough to frustrate this measure of good also, remains to be seen. We confess, we are not very sanguine as to the result. That it is a measure of justice and of right, and a relief to conscience, and the removal of a grievance, and of a scandal even to the Established Church itself, will not matter much, we apprehend, with those who at

this time of day, have to inquire What a Unitarian is, or who imagine a coronation oath is a sufficient motive to which to sacrifice the happiness, and the improvement of millions. We are happily better off on this side the Tweed; but this does not make us the less anxious, that our brethren should enjoy an equal liberty with ourselves, or render us less interested spectators of the manner in which claims of conscience are set at nought. In Scotland, the strictly legal marriage, we mean so as to secure all rights, church privileges included, is effected, by the design being proclaimed three times in the parish church; and on a certificate of due proclamation being presented, the parties may be united by the minister of their own choice. He certifies the date of the performance of the service, and that is entered in the public register, a copy of such registration being preserved by the parties themselves. May our brethren be speedily emancipated from their present thraldom. In the mean time, we highly approve the conduct of those who conscientiously differ from the doctrines and discipline of the Church of England, presenting their protest against being dragged before an altar, where they cannot worship in spirit and in truth. We thank our respected friends, whose names are appended to the following Protest, for their Christian firmness and integrity; and we trust that it is a pledge, that a union entered upon with strict religious feelings and principles, will be honourable and happy. May they prove it so.

"To the Reverend ——— Topping, Vicar of the Parish and Parish Church of Leigh,

"We, the undersigned, being Unitarian Christians, feel called upon by a sense of duty to ourselves, to our fellow-worshippers, and to our God, to protest against the ceremony in which we are about to engage, on the solemnization of our marriage. We do so, not because it is a religious service, but because it inculcates a a doctrine (the Trinity), in which we do not believe; and because it teaches to pray for blessings from God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, for whose worship we find no warrant in Holy Writ. 'In that day, and that hour, ye shall ask me nothing.' 'The true worshippers shall worship the Father.' 'When ye pray, say, Our Father.' Such was the language of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus, and as he taught he practised, and his example was followed by his Apostles. We believe in the divine mission of Christ; we admit his authority as the head of his Church, and to him we humbly submit ourselves as a Teacher sent from God. We believe in the Holy Spirit, as the power, influence, and energy of God, by which he revealed himself to his creatures, and enabled them to work miracles. But 'unto us there is but One God, the Father, of whom are all things;' and unto us, there is but 'one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.' We possibly may be in error; but so long as we believe in the doctrines we profess, we cannot conscientiously join in acts of worship to any other being, than the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nor can we ascribe glory to God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, equally with God the Father, as it was in the beginning, is now,

and ever shall be, world without end. We dare not ascribe that to the creature which belongs to the Creator alone. We find no such language in the Scriptures, and they are the only authority we admit for true doctrine.

"As, however, we cannot, in accordance with the laws of our country, be joined together in marriage, without submitting to the ceremony imposed by your Church, we do so submit, distinctly avowing our disbelief in the doctrine of the Trinity, which it inculcates, and solemnly and earnestly protesting against the violation of conscience, which it inflicts, by compelling us to join in a service which we disapprove, and which we believe to be irreconcileable with the Scriptures.

"Whilst we thus protest, we wish you, as the Minister of that Church by which the ceremony is imposed, to understand that we attach no blame to you. As its servant, you are bound to administer its ordinances in the form it has prescribed. As Unitarians, we conceive ourselves equally blameless, and equally justifiable, in avowing our disbelief in its doctrines.

"We are, Reverend Sir, Yours, very respectfully,

"FREDERICK BOARDMAN.
"*Leigh, May* 3, 1827. HANNAH ECKERSLY."

No one can lament more than the sober, serious, and practical disciple of Jesus, the fanaticism which has so often disgraced the Christian name. It might have been hoped, that, in the present day, such grounds for lamentation would not have occurred. Comparatively enlightened, however, as are the times in which we live, still the dregs of religious absurdity are not yet washed away. The party which still seems occasionally to glory in this their shame, is the Methodist. In the month of May last, Yarmouth was disgraced by one of those exhibitions of spiritual buffoonery, denominated a Revival. Prayers for the sinful and unconverted were offered up; as soon as any felt *miserable*, they walked into the table-pew, where they were exhorted to weep and groan to the utmost of their power; after which, they "found peace," and were ycleped by the leader of infatuation, "perfect Christians," "the chosen of Heaven!" The minister, during the singing of the most exciting hymns, walked round the chapel, and inquired in a smooth, honeyed accent, at the same time taking their hands in his—"Have you found the Lord?" More females than males were thus accosted. When any were touched to the quick, he thumped these weepers and groaners on the back, and with stentorian lungs implored them to "weep louder," or the God who died for them perchance would not hear them! But the scene is too loathsome to be longer dwelt upon, or more minutely detailed. These are the people, who go about proclaiming, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we!" Surely Christ is again crucified, by such proceedings—proceedings which only make the pious believer blush, and the unbeliever triumph. Surely it is an additional call on those, who have put away such

childish things, to exert their every power, that their brethren may be freed also, from such debasing representations and ideas of the religion of reason, peace, and benevolence.

At Astley, near Chowbent, Lancashire, was held, by appointment, on Monday, June 4th, a meeting of Catholics and Unitarians, to discuss the truth of the doctrine, which teaches the Supreme Deity of Christ. About 250 persons were present; and the disputants were Mr. Unsworth on the side of the Catholics, and Mr. Francis Duffield on the side of the Unitarians. Two Chairmen, one of each party, presided. The debate lasted four hours; and if we can judge by the countenances of the audience, and by the force of the argument, a most valuable impression in favour of Unitarian Christianity was made. Never did the writer witness a more orderly, or a more interesting meeting. At the close of the discussion, it was proposed, that, as the two Chairmen had yet to speak—as the room was intensely hot, and as a great number of persons were on the outside anxious to hear —the meeting should remove into the open air. Here a very large body of people was addressed by the Chairman, on the part of the Trinitarians, and by the Rev. J. R. Beard, the Chairman chosen by the Unitarians. It was not till near nine o'clock that the proceedings terminated, when the speakers on the Unitarian side, met about 50 persons belonging to the Unitarian Society at Astley. We were particularly interested by the remarks made by some of the members of the congregation; especially by those of one who told the meeting, that, not more than two years since, he had regarded the Unitarians with such aversion, that rather even than pass by their place of worship, he had made himself a way through hedges and ditches, and over barn doors. But his children went to no Sunday school; he saw, that they were neglected. When he returned home from his labour, he often found them quarrelling: on this, he determined to send them to the Unitarian Sunday school, thinking they could not be much injured, and might be made better. He found, in fact, that they did improve; this induced him to think of going himself—his prejudices began to wane—he went—was interested and benefited—he went again and again—began seriously to think—to weigh the evidence which the preachers, whom he heard, adduced; and at last, after sober and anxious inquiry, became a believer in the unrivalled supremacy and essential goodness of the Almighty.

The meeting was closed by singing a hymn; and as the friends of truth and religion departed to their homes, they could not fail to contrast the emotions of their own bosoms, and the bosoms of those who had been engaged with them, with the feelings of those poor creatures who, at this holiday season, were abandoned to the lowest and most brutalizing gratifications. G. C. S.

On Wednesday, June 6, the annual meeting of the Shropshire, Cheshire, and Staffordshire Unitarian Association, was held at

Whitchurch. The Rev. Hugh Hutton of Birmingham preached two excellent sermons on the occasion; one on the doctrine of the two natures in Christ; the other on the necessity of distinct Scriptural views of the nature of Christ's office. After the morning service, the friends assembled to dine together; and the afternoon was spent in the interchange of kindly feelings, and of a variety of sentiments, calculated to provoke each other to love and to good works.

THE British and Foreign Unitarian Association held its Annual Meeting in London, on the 5th, 6th, and 7th June. The Meeting for hearing the Committee's Report, was held at the Chapel in Finsbury-Place, on the 6th. The chair was taken by J. Christie, Esq. the Treasurer. The Report was read by the Rev. R. Aspland, the Rev. Dr. Rees, and J. Bowring, Esq. the Secretaries of the Institution. It commenced by stating, that the result of their exertions for the spread of true and liberal Christianity during the past year, was, on the whole satisfactory, and that they had not laboured altogether in vain. The Report was divided into four parts:—1st, The Home Department; 2d, Civil Rights; 3d, The Book Department; 4th, Foreign Department. Upon the first, it stated that the principles of Unitarianism were making slow but promising progress in various parts of the United Kingdom. A mission had been planted in the potteries of Staffordshire, among a dense mass of population, under the ministry of Mr. Clarke; and from his reports, there was every prospect of the most gratifying success. In Kent and Sussex, another gentleman in the service of the association, was employed, but hitherto with less apparent success. In Suffolk, their cause wore a more promising aspect; their missionary had been most indefatigable, and great good was confidently anticipated from his labours. He, like all his brethren, had been much persecuted by all sects of Christians—Methodists, Calvinists, and Churchmen—all of whom, however, he had challenged to argument, but all of whom declined. At one place, the Dissenting clergyman gave notice of his intention to preach 12 lectures on the Orthodox doctrines; and he immediately announced, that he would preach from the same texts in rotation, and, subsequently, six sermons on the non-eternity of future punishments. The Report then enumerated some other places in Gloucestershire and Yorkshire; and concluded the first part with copious extracts of correspondence with friends in Ireland.

The Report then proceeded to detail the exertions of the Committee, for the attainment and preservation of their civil rights. It stated, that owing to the lamentable illness of their firm and steady friend, Lord Liverpool, it became a matter of serious inquiry, whether the present session was a fit and proper period for them to again press their peculiar claims upon the attention of the legislature; but after the calmest deliberation they could give to the subject, they were decidedly of opinion, that it was; and they had, consequently, got their bill (the Unitarian Marriage Bill) introduced into Parliament. They had introduced the pre-

sent bill in a different form to that in which it had heretofore been presented. It contained a short form of words to be used on the marriage of Unitarians in the established church, or vestry, before the clergyman, and at his option; and upon the payment of his usual fee, the marriage was to be registered and considered legal. The Report then detailed the strenuous efforts that had been recently made, by the various denominations of Protestant Dissenters, for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, in all which endeavours the Committee had cordially joined. It dilated at much length, on the impolicy and disgracefulness of the apathy manifested by the Dissenters, in suffering their just claims so long to remain dormant; and expressed their unqualified disapproval —a disapproval in which they were joined by the most influential of the Dissenters themselves, as well as Lord John Russell, and Mr. John Smith, M. P. the intended mover and seconder of the measure—of the postponement of that important question—a resolution the Report pronounced as alike injurious and disgraceful. It then alluded to the expressions of opposition from Mr. Canning, which, however, they trusted, were only for reasons of temporary expediency; and they confidently anticipated the speedy removal of these unjust and mischievous statutes. It then glanced at the opposition of some Dissenters to Catholic emancipation; but, while it regretted that any should be found, who would resist that measure of justice and sound policy, they believed that it was confined to a very small number, and those of the most illiterate of the body. The third part, stated the junction of the Unitarian Book Society with the Association, and that books and tracts had been distributed in Calcutta, Paris, Glasgow, and in various other towns in England and Scotland. It also announced, that the Monthly Repository had been purchased by the Association, and would in future be conducted under the direction of the Committee. The Report then proceeded to a detail of the Foreign Department. It stated, that a Mission was established at Calcutta, from which place, by the next anniversary, they hoped to receive gratifying accounts of the spread of Unitarian principles. At Madras, a Unitarian church had been for some years in existence. The Committee said, that they called on the friends of India to fulfil their generous promises, as to the Calcutta chapel and mission, and, indeed, on all who looked with hope and with interest on the spread of Christian truth, associated as it was, with one of the most illustrious names which ever graced the Anglo-Indian pages, that of Rammohun Roy, over a territory wider in extent, and vaster in population, than ever before submitted to the dominion of strangers. In a country, it was added, where idolatry and superstition in their most barbarous and disgusting forms, had had their triumphant, their immemorial reign; where the few gleams of truth which might be discovered by learned industry, in the obscure records of the past, had been wholly overshadowed and darkened by the grossest and foulest polytheism; none could watch the uprising of the day-star of a holier and a purer faith, without anxiety and joy—without the

desire and the attempt to diffuse its happy influences. The Report further stated, that in the United States of America, measures had been taken to unite the different and scattered Unitarian interests, into one grand and efficient body, from which the happiest results were anticipated. From Transylvania, which might be deemed the mother country of Unitarianism, the Committee had received the most gratifying accounts. The number who profess that faith in that quarter, was estimated at 50,000. The superintending authority was vested in the Preses of the general Synod. A college had long been established at Klausenberg, which contained about 300 students; besides, there were two gymnasia, or preparatory schools, at Thomburg and Keresztur. In France, and other countries on the Continent, the Committee flattered themselves they saw an opening for the introduction of their tenets.

In the evening, a Sermon was preached before the Association, at the Chapel in Finsbury-Place, by the Rev. E. Tagart of Norwich. The Rev. J. Kenrick, M. A. one of the Tutors in the College at York, preached on the Thursday morning, in the same Chapel; and collections in aid of the Association, were made at the close of both the services. The public dinner of the subscribers and friends to the Institution, was held at the London Tavern, on Thursday; G. W. Wood, Esq. of Manchester, in the Chair. Several animated addresses were delivered, and the following Petition to Parliament, was hailed with acclamation:—

"The humble Petition of the undersigned, being persons assembling as individual or representative Members, at the Annual General Meeting of the Unitarian Dissenters of England,

"Sheweth,—That your Petitioners are, in common with other non-conformists, declared by law to be unworthy of occupying any place or office in the government of corporations, and of trust under his Majesty.

"That your Petitioners were, on account of their peculiar religious opinions, subjected, until lately, to laws conceived in the bitterest spirit of persecution, but from which they have been relieved by a more just, humane, and enlightened policy, whose existence and progress they gratefully acknowledge.

"That in all the efforts which, as Dissenters, or as a particular branch of Dissenters, they have made, or may continue to make, for their emancipation from the penal enactments, which more immediately affect themselves, your Petitioners value any success which may follow their exertions, in the exact proportion in which it may conduce to the assertion and establishment of the most extended principles of religious liberty; and as it may tend to defeat and render odious that unjust, absurd, and impolitic exercise of power, by which the community is divided into oppressed and oppressing classes, and religious opinion is made the pretence for civil disabilities, preferences, and exclusions.

"That your Petitioners have zealously concurred individually, and in their immediate circles, in petitions and remonstrances against the enactments by which Protestant Dissenters are, with peculiar injustice and inconsistency, made to feel the weight of

insulting and degrading laws, avowedly directed to other objects, and now preserved only by prejudice or misconception; but they gladly avail themselves of the opportunity afforded by the meeting of some of their brethren from all parts of the kingdom, thus to record, as a body, their solemn declaration, which they are convinced, would be echoed by the vast majority of their dissenting brethren of every denomination—that their desire for the blessings of liberty is limited by no reserves or qualifications—that it is clogged by no exceptions—that they seek to vindicate for conscience, and, therefore, for true religion, the free and unbiassed exercise of the judgment and understanding; and that every where, and in every shape, they deprecate, as alike futile, impolitic, and unjust, the principle of persecution, or the assumption of a right either to reward, to tolerate, or to punish, in matters which they believe to be too high for human control.

"Your Petitioners, therefore, humbly pray your Honourable House, as the prayer most consonant to their feelings and understandings, most worthy in their judgment to be uttered by a Christian and a well-wisher to his fellow-creatures, to discard for ever the wretched relics of ignorant and misguided zeal, by abolishing all penal laws in matters of religion, and by placing all the members of the community, in that respect, on an equal footing; to heal the divisions and distractions by which Catholic and Protestant Churchmen, and Dissenters, are seduced into the unchristian habit of regarding each other with feelings wholly inconsistent with brotherly kindness and charity; and to legislate upon those sound and enlightened principles of freedom, which can alone secure to any community, peace and harmony, and prosperity and honourable fame. And your Petitioners shall ever pray."

On Thursday, the 7th June, 1827, was held at Padiham, the Annual Association of the different Societies of Methodist Unitarians in Lancashire. The service in the morning was introduced by Mr. J. Ashworth of Newchurch; and a very interesting discourse was delivered from Acts xxviii. 22, by the Rev. F. Howorth of Rochdale. The preacher ably answered many of the popular objections to Unitarian Christianity; and exhorted his auditory to evince the superior excellence of their faith by the purity and holiness of their lives. He passed a justly merited eulogium on those useful men, who, though engaged in secular pursuits during the week, go out on the Sunday to instruct their fellow-creatures in the great and important truths of Christianity, and whose labours have been attended in this district with such beneficial effects.

After the conclusion of the services at the Chapel, the friends, in number 120, male and female, retired to an inn, and sat down to a plain dinner. The utmost harmony pervaded the meeting; and we were pleased at the very reasonable price of the dinner, which was fifteenpence, including every expense. This arrangement admitted the poorer brethren to participate in the pleasures which Christian intercourse is so peculiarly calculated to impart.

After dinner, the business of the Meeting was transacted in the Chapel; the Rev. N. Jones in the chair. Reports were then given of the different Societies connected with the Association, *viz.* Rochdale, Newchurch, Burnley, Todmorden, Oldham, Rawtonstall, and Padiham. We were happy to hear that most of these Congregations, as well as the Sunday-Schools connected with them, are in a flourishing state. The Societies at Newchurch and Padiham have considerably increased during the last year. Padiham is principally supplied with preaching by two worthy individuals of the Congregation, and with occasional assistance from the "Lancashire and Cheshire Unitarian Missionary Society."

The writer of this report spent the following Sunday, after the Association, with this truly interesting and religious people, and preached to respectable audiences; in the afternoon, to about two hundred and fifty, and in the evening to upwards of three hundred. He likewise preached in some of the neighbouring villages; and considers this district a congenial soil to disseminate the seeds of Christian Unitarianism. We lament to say that trade in this place, and indeed throughout this part of the county, has been so depressed, that the weavers have scarcely been able by honest industry to supply even the wants of nature. One of the humble individuals above alluded to, remarked, "that, amidst all their distress, they had not lost their religion, which imparted to the dejected mind, under the most calamitous circumstances, the purest and highest consolation!" Such are the happy influences of Unitarianism, when it takes its sway over the human mind. With sincere pleasure we state, that the different Societies in this district have received assistance both in money and clothing, from congregational collections, and from benevolent individuals in the Metropolis, for which they return their grateful acknowledgments.

In the evening, the friends again assembled for divine worship. Mr. Buckland, the Missionary, read the hymns, and engaged in prayer; and a very excellent sermon was preached by Mr. Jones, from the words of the Apostle, "If any man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself." No one could listen to the preacher but with a lively interest; and but few we think, went away without being convinced that charity and humility are essential to the formation of the Christian character. Mr. Tate, who had engaged to preach in the evening, was prevented in consequence of indisposition. Thus ended the proceedings of a day devoted to the cultivation of friendship, the promotion of piety, and the furtherance of the Christian religion.

U. M.

ERSKINE is a name, as many of our readers know, mingled with the religious feelings and associations of a numerous and highly respectable body of Christians in Scotland. Individuals of that name were the leaders in the secession from the Scottish Established Church. They seceded, mainly, because they thought the Establishment had seceded from the declarations of the Solemn League and Covenant; they seceded, because patronage was cal-

culated to lead to the introduction of unworthy pastors into the Church; and especially, that it deprived the people of the privilege of choosing him who was to minister to them in holy things. Almost, if not the first, Chapel erected by this denomination, on this side the river Forth, was on the Moor of Davies-Dikes, a wild and comparatively uninhabited spot, but nearly equi-distant from numerous villages and towns. Here a very large congregation was collected. In course of years, however, it was found necessary to build a place of worship in a more populous part of the district; and the old Meeting-house was deserted. It was near this building, that the Unitarian Congregation of Carluke, accompanied by many of their friends from Glasgow, Airdrie, Kirk of Shotts, Orbiston, Holytown, Hamilton, Lanark, Wishawtown, &c. assembled, on Sabbath the 10th June, for the worship of the One true God, the Father;—

"They sought
The upland moors, where rivers, there but brooks,
Dispart to different seas. Fast by such brooks
A little glen is sometimes scoop'd, a plat
With green sward gay, and flowers that strangers seem
Amid the heathery wild, that all around
Fatigues the eye. In solitudes like these,
Thy persecuted children, Scotia, foil'd
A tyrant's and a bigot's bloody laws."

In such a spot was the worship conducted; the preacher being placed in the hollow, and the congregation sitting on the surrounding banks. Two sermons (combined in one for publication) were delivered by the Rev. George Harris, from Isaiah xxxv; and a little tract explanatory of the principles of Christian Unitarianism, was distributed afterwards amongst the people. The worship began at twelve o'clock noon, and concluded, with an hour's interval, about five. The day was delightful, and an increase of religious feeling, and of desire to promote the progress of Reformation, we are persuaded, was called forth by the services of this Sabbath. The discourse has been since published, and may be procured of our various friends who sell the Magazine.

On Thursday, 21st June, was held the Provincial Meeting of the Counties of Lancashire and Cheshire, at the Unitarian Chapel, Warrington. The Rev. C. Wallace of Altrincham, preached an excellent sermon, in which he exposed the futility of the doctrine of the two natures in Christ. About seventy gentlemen sat down to dinner, about thirty of whom were ministers, including the Rev. Mr. Fotheringay of Boston, in America. After the dinner, the Chairman (the Rev. Charles Wallace) called on the Secretary of the Provincial Meeting, the Rev. Edward Hawkes, to read the report of the proceedings of the Committee appointed at the last Annual Meeting, to form of the Provincial Meeting a General Association for the North West of England. It appeared from the Report, that the Committee had not met with the success in their efforts which

was to be hoped; so far, however, from abating in their zeal, they declared themselves firmly convinced of the utility of an Association, comprising in its review at least, if not consolidating in itself, all the various societies in the two counties, having for their object the furtherance of knowledge and pure religion; pledged to the support of Unitarian Christianity, by assisting declining congregations, reviving such as may have become extinct, and opening out new fields of operation—by missionary preaching—by the distribution of books and tracts—by defending the rights of Dissenters—and enabled to do this through that increase of resources, zeal, and influence, which ever attend on associated efforts. The Rev. J. R. Beard, in proposing that the Report be received and approved, regretted that the duty had fallen upon him, through the absence of one far more able, yet not more willing, to discharge it. He would apprise the meeting, that the adoption of the Report, would pledge them to other measures which followed of course, namely, the appointment of a Committee, and the raising of funds. It was intended to propose, that every minister in the two counties, should be, ex officio, members of the Committee, and a certain number of gentlemen, to be hereafter named; also, that every minister in the two counties should be requested by this meeting, to assist in raising funds, either by preaching a sermon, or by procuring private donations and subscriptions, or by aid from the fellowship funds, or in any way that appears best. He then went on to urge on the company, the propriety of such an Institution, as that now proposed. Unitarianism was truth, and therefore had imperative claims on our support; it was calculated to check infidelity, to meet the wants and secure the good-will of this enlightened and inquiring age—the liberty which it found, it would foster and increase—it would dispel the lingering mists of superstition—purify the heart of the depraved—and be a universal quickener of intellect. In an especial manner, were the friends of religion and purity called upon to exert themselves, by the present situation of the two counties of Lancaster and Chester. There had been much commotion—was it not probable that discontent still remained? There had been hard pressing calamity—this must have exerted a detrimental influence on the morals of the people. And in reply to an objection which had been taken, that Unitarians already did as much as they ought to be expected to do,—he believed, and it was best to declare honestly his conviction, that their exertions were commensurate neither with the goodness of their cause, nor the expectation of friends, nor the wants of the community, nor the measure of their resources. It was a notorious fact, that the orthodox looked with a feeling bordering on contempt, on our pigmy efforts; and well might they do so, when the opulence of our body was considered, and the degree of importance which we attached to our views. And for himself, he could not but consider, that those ministers were labouring under a grievous error, who now seemed to regard it as a grievous thing, to go before their congregations, and ask their assistance for the promotion of benevolent objects. The more fre-

quently they went in reason, the more would it appear to God and man, that their hearts were in their work—the more would they awaken their people's generosity—the greater would be the love of the people towards them—and the greater the amount of good effected, for the furtherance of knowledge and piety. He would not detain them, by enlarging on the benefits of associating for the extension of truth; these benefits were well detailed in the Report.

After some objections made on the part of Messrs. Broadbent, J. Grundy, Ottiwell Wood, &c. and answered by Messrs. G. W. Wood, J. J. Tayler, J. Hawkes, and others; the Report was adopted, and the other motions alluded to by Mr. Beard, were passed. We understand, that the Committee, feeling the great importance of firmly establishing, and bringing into active operation and general favour, such an Association, intend to exert themselves with peculiar diligence, in order to raise funds, to discover and assist objects worthy of their attention. For ourselves, we wish them every success, convinced that the necessity of active and united exertions, are every day becoming more requisite; and being ashamed, that it has hitherto belonged almost exclusively to the orthodox, to parcel out the country by provincial associations, in order to take complete possession of the land. We are late, it is true; but we bate not a jot of heart or hope, for the Mighty God of Jacob is with us.

The report at the forty-first annual meeting of the Manchester College, York, has just reached us. It appears that in addition to the usual tutors—the Divinity, Mathematical, and Classical—the Chevalier Pecchio has been engaged as a permanent professor in the modern languages. The Committee have received, during the last year, some considerable benefactions; amongst them we notice one of £100, through the hands of the Rev. Russell Scott, of Portsmouth. The number of students during the last session, was twenty-five; namely, ten lay, and fifteen divinity students. The number of divinity students during the present session, is sixteen, and the total number of ministers educated by the College is fifty-one. We heartily wish the institution all the success it so well deserves; and we rejoice to hear, that the Missionary Society, which is supported by the gratuitous exertions of the divinity students, continues to flourish.

We have heard that the Unitarian Congregations at the following places are in want of Ministers:—Liverpool, Renshaw-Street Chapel; Manchester, Cross-Street Chapel, a co-pastor with the Rev. J. G. Robberds; Dob-Lane, near Manchester; Lincoln; Macclesfield; Diss; Bridport; Bristol, a co-pastor with Rev. J. Rowe; Taunton, a co-pastor with Rev. Dr. Davis.

THE Rev. J. Porter from Belfast, is settled with the Congregation of Unitarian Christians assembling in the Park Chapel, Liverpool.

THE Unitarian Congregation at Taunton, have lately subscribed about six hundred pounds to repair and beautify their Chapel, and to erect an organ. They have also determined to engage a second Minister, and to have a regular Sunday-evening service, when the Chapel is re-opened.

MANY hundred Petitions from Congregations of Protestant Dissenters in Great Britain, have this Session been presented to Parliament for the Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. This is as it should be. These remnants of intolerance may not at present be swept away from the statute-book which they have too long disgraced, but the time must come when they will be doomed to oblivion. The Dissenters have themselves to blame that they have so long been branded as aliens from the commonwealth. They might wait for ever in expectation that ignorance and bigotry would renounce the power with which they have been invested in bygone ages. It is only the man who claims his rights, and proves his fitness for their possession, by his enlightened and upright conduct, that ever will obtain, or that deserves to enjoy their blessings. We regret to observe, that the motion for the repeal has been postponed to another session. In a question of justice and of right we know nothing of political expediency. Conscience ought not to be trammelled, nor the holy ordinance of the Saviour profaned, even for an hour, to suit the intrigues of any party, or to humour the ignorant fancies of aspirants of office. We deprecate all such time-serving pleas. Let the Dissenters be true to themselves, and they must eventually conquer every prejudice which now oppresses them.

In desiring the repeal of these unrighteous Acts, we say, in the spirit of the language of the Rev. R. Aspland, at the meeting of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, we have in view no sectarian purpose. Our fondest wish and most earnest prayer is, that the doors of the temple of freedom may be thrown wide open to all denominations of Britons; and that Roman Catholic and Protestant Dissenters may enter hand in hand, and there sit down beside the Churchman, to consult, not on the means of annoying one another, but, on those of serving their country, the burial-place of their fathers, and the birth-place of their children.

THE General Synod of Ulster assembled at Strabane on Tuesday last. We hope to give an account of the proceedings in our next Number.

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On Education.—No. 3.

(Concluded from page 375.)

THE peculiar glory of the age, which will constitute it a splendid era in the page of history, is to be found in the exertions now making from one end of the kingdom to the other, to diffuse knowledge and intelligence by the *education of the people.* "As evidence of the vast progress which we have made in right thinking upon this subject, we cannot help remarking, that even Milton and Locke, though both men of great benevolence toward the larger family of mankind, and both men whose sentiments were democratical, yet seem, in their writings on education, to have had in view no education but that of the *gentleman.* It had not presented itself, even to their minds, that education was a blessing in which the indigent orders could be made to partake."* Vast, therefore, are the advances we have made, and mighty is the revolution which has taken place in opinion; "In every class of the community knowledge has extended, and is extending itself to a degree, which half a century ago, would have been deemed perfectly impossible."† But the principle is now fearlessly advocated by senators, philosophers, and professors. The times of regeneration are indeed arrived, when a cabinet minister expressly avows, that "when the people are instructed in what is really for their good—when they are correctly informed as to what that good is, they will abstain from using any means that will be prejudicial in their operations, either in opposing any measure which they dislike, or in obtaining any acquisition which they may desire to possess. I am, therefore," continues the right honourable speaker, "a sincere friend to the diffusion of knowledge amongst mankind; and I agree entirely in the truth of that maxim, a maxim despised by some individuals, that 'knowledge is power.'"† Nor is this a solitary

* Mill's Essays. † Right Hon. F. Robinson, Chancellor of Exchequer, now Viscount Goderich.

testimony. The late Home Secretary declares it to be his opinion, that "where knowledge was extensively diffused throughout the population of a country, a mob (*i. e.* an unthinking assembly) could never acquire any permanent ascendancy."* And he is supported by an authority of the highest order, who affirms it to be "highly useful to the community, that the true principles of the constitution, ecclesiastical and civil, should be well understood by every man who lives under it."† When the dissemination even of political information, is thus advocated—when Chancellors and Secretaries enrol themselves partizans of the holy cause, what becomes of divine right and legitimacy, and passive obedience, and non-resistance, doctrines formerly had in such reverence? Priests and bigots, theological or political, may vainly attempt to stem the current of improvement; but, alas! for them, their occupation's gone. Glorious are the signs of the times, for "those are past and gone, when bigots could persuade mankind that the lights of philosophy were to be extinguished, as dangerous to religion; and when tyrants could proscribe the instructors of the people, as enemies to their power."‡

And popular education will eventually create a new agency—a new influence which will produce all important effects: originating in humble Sunday schools—matured by mechanics' institutes, and public reading societies—cherished and invigorated by numberless and extensively varied periodicals, it forms the basis, and gives stability and consistency, to that public opinion, to which we have before alluded. It will become a great moral lever, to raise the superincumbent classes of society in the scale of intellect. Instruct the *many*, and those who assume to be above them, who, from birth or adventitious circumstances, arrogate superiority, will find it necessary to maintain that superiority, by increasing their stores of knowledge, by enlarged studies and more comprehensive attainments. Thus will a wholesome emulation be excited—thus will a mighty cause be originated, influencing the education, the real education of all classes; and who can anticipate the brilliant consequences?

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* Hon. Robert Peel. † Mr. Brougham.

‡ Brougham's Practical Observations upon the Education of the People. A pamphlet containing excellent details and illustrations of the amazing facility with which, not merely elementary education, but scientific knowledge may be disseminated.

It was reserved for the present age to proclaim, that the education of the general mass of society, is an incumbent duty devolving upon those who have happily participated in favourable advantages; that the ignorance of the majority is discreditable, if not debasing, to all—that man, whatever be his station in life, is endowed with capabilities by one common Creator, which no fellow-creature has a right to shackle with the bonds of ignorance, but rather to invigorate and strengthen, by the genial beams and influence of knowledge. Such opinions, eloquently advocated, and becoming daily more general, ennoble the present age; it may challenge the brightest, the most resplendent eras of antiquity; nor can even Greece or Rome contest the palm. Could those nations boast the possession of unrivalled wisdom—of all the civilization, literature, and philosophy, which the world contained? But by whom possessed? Was the whole mass of the population enlightened, or were the blessings of superior knowledge confined to a favoured few? Did the sages of the porch, or the grove, instruct *all* their countrymen, or were not the vast majority sunk in deplorable ignorance, and its concomitant vices? Did the Roman bond-slaves receive mental culture and improvement, from the "lovers of wisdom;" or the Helots participate in the advantages of the philosophical schools? Let history reply. To educate, then, *the people*—to make them thinkers and reasoners, is an original attempt, and one which invests our generation with a proud pre-eminence. By its means, we shall become an intellectual nation—a nation of men. Nor is this a utopian dream. The friends of truth and of man are on the alert, and are using every exertion. They have proclaimed, and it will never be forgotten, that ignorance is incompatible with man's welfare and happiness, and that all men are capable of receiving wisdom;* that the portals of wisdom's temple are open to all; that the paths of science, literature, and the arts, are free and unproscribed; and men are endowed with gifts by their Creator, without respect to classes, orders, or castes. They have proclaimed the holy truth, that the humblest in life are not beneath improvement, or impervious to instruction—that poverty does not incapacitate the hewers of wood and drawers of

* The noble biographer of *Sir William Jones*, records it as a favourite opinion of that philosopher, "that all men are born with an equal capacity of improvement."

water, from receiving knowledge—that the perception of wisdom is not destroyed by the rags of destitution, or the avocations of daily toil; but that with equal means, equal facilities for acquiring information, no one class can lord it over the rest as wisdom's favourite sons. In mental vigour, and intellectual capacity, the invidious distinctions of plebeian and patrician are unknown; we find "king, slave, and lord, 'ennobled into MAN!'" The acquisition of mental food is as wholesome to the poor as to the rich, and the influence is alike beneficial to both, for mind is not the heir-loom of wealth, nor high talents inseparably connected with noble blood or hereditary dignity; and as knowledge extends,

> "————this great truth
> Shall be confess'd—be felt by all mankind.
> The electric truth shall run from man to man;
> And the blood-cemented pyramid of greatness
> Shall fall before the flash!"

May the cause of education—enlightened, untrammelled education—proceed in triumph; and may that day speedily arrive, when men will have universally become informed and thinking beings, forming their own conclusions, weighing evidence, dispassionately judging, and freely embracing the result of their inquiries. Then will truth be respected for herself alone, and virtue be clothed in her pristine dignity, and honest independence raise its unpretending head; and the titled peer will obtain respect only by deserving it; and the mitred dignitary will no longer be considered sacred, but his dogmas subjected to examination, and not implicitly received if opposed to common sense; and the mystic legends and marvellous fables, with which priestcraft has fed credulity, will be exploded, and the gainful craft of priesthood be stripped of its wealth; and Christianity be freed from its corruptions, and beam forth as the benign revelation of an all-merciful Father—given to the world by a messenger full of grace and truth; and man will be one large family—one universal brotherhood—a fraternity of rational beings; judgment and discrimination assuming their true province, and reason be heard and submitted to as the arbiter of right, and revelation be embraced as a reasonable service;—and then will the anticipation of the poet be fulfilled:

> "That sense and worth o'er a' the earth,
> May bear the gree and a' that;
> For a' that, and a' that,
> It's coming yet for a' that:
> That man to man, the warld o'er,
> Shall brothers be for a' that."

ZACCHEUS.

Dr. Channing's Discourse, at New-York.

(Concluded from page 414.)

IX. I now proceed to the last consideration, which the limits of this discourse will permit me to urge. It has been more than once suggested, but deserves to be distinctly stated. I observe, then, that Unitarianism promotes piety, because it is a *rational religion.* By this, I do not mean, that its truths can be fully comprehended; for there is not an object in nature or religion, which has not innumerable connexions and relations beyond our grasp of thought. I mean, that its doctrines are consistent with one another, and with all established truth. Unitarianism is in harmony with the great and clear principles of revelation—with the laws and power of human nature—with the dictates of the moral sense—with the noblest instincts and highest aspirations of the soul—and with the lights, which the universe throws on the character of its Author. We can hold this doctrine without self-contradiction—without rebelling against our rational and moral powers—without putting to silence the divine monitor in the breast. And this is an unspeakable benefit; for a religion, thus coincident with reason, conscience, and our whole spiritual being, has the foundations of universal empire in the breast; and the heart, finding no resistance in the intellect, yields itself wholly, cheerfully, without doubts or misgivings, to the love of its Creator.

To Trinitarianism we object, what has always been objected to it, that it contradicts and degrades reason, and thus exposes the mind to the worst delusions. Some of its advocates, more courageous than prudent, have even recommended "the prostration of the understanding," as preparatory to its reception. Its chief doctrine is an outrage on our rational nature. Its three persons, who constitute its God, must either be frittered away into three unmeaning distinctions—into sounds signifying nothing; or they are three conscious agents, who cannot, by any human art or metaphysical device, be made to coalesce into one being—who cannot be really viewed as one mind, having one consciousness and one will. Now, a religious system, the cardinal principle of which offends the understanding, very naturally conforms itself throughout to this prominent feature, and becomes prevalently irrational. He who is compelled to defend his faith in any particular, by the plea

that human reason is so depraved through the fall, as to be an inadequate judge of religion, and that God is honoured by our reception of what shocks the intellect, seems to have no defence left against accumulated absurdities. According to these principles, the fanatic, who exclaimed, "I believe, because it is impossible!" had a fair title to canonization. Reason is too Godlike a faculty, to be insulted with impunity. Accordingly, Trinitarianism, as we have seen, links itself with several degrading errors; and its most natural alliance is with Calvinism—that cruel faith, which, stripping God of mercy and man of power, has made Christianity an instrument of torture to the timid, and an object of doubt or scorn to hardier spirits. I repeat it, a doctrine, which violates reason like the Trinity, prepares its advocates, in proportion as it is incorporated into the mind, for worse and worse delusions. It breaks down the distinctions and barriers between truth and falsehood. It creates a diseased taste for prodigies, fictions, and exaggerations—for startling mysteries, and wild dreams of enthusiasm. It destroys the relish for the simple, chaste, serene beauties of truth. Especially when the prostration of understanding is taught as an act of piety, we cannot wonder, that the grossest superstitions should be devoured, and that the credulity of the multitude should keep pace with the forgeries of imposture and fanaticism. The history of the church is the best comment on the effects of divorcing reason from religion; and if the present age is disburdened of many of the superstitions, under which Christianity and human nature groaned for ages, it owes its relief in no small degree to the reinstating of reason in her long-violated rights.

The injury to religion from irrational doctrines, when thoroughly believed, is immense. The human soul has a unity. Its various faculties are adapted to one another. One life pervades it; and its beauty, strength, and growth, depend on nothing so much, as on the harmony and joint action of all its principles. To wound and degrade it in any of its powers, and especially in the noble and distinguishing power of reason, is to inflict on it universal injury. No notion is more false, than that the heart is to thrive by dwarfing the intellect—that perplexing doctrines are the best food of piety—that religion flourishes most luxuriantly in mists and darkness. Reason was given for God as its great object; and for him it should be kept

sacred, invigorated, clarified, protected from human usurpation, and inspired with a meek self-reverence.

The soul never acts so effectually or joyfully, as when all its powers and affections conspire—as when thought and feeling, reason and sensibility, are called forth together by one great and kindling object. It will never devote itself to God with its whole energy, whilst its guiding faculty sees in him a being to shock and confound it. We want a harmony in our inward nature. We want a piety, which will join light and fervour, and on which the intellectual power will look benignantly. We want religion to be so exhibited, that, in the clearest moments of the intellect, its signatures of truth will grow brighter; that instead of tottering, it will gather strength and stability from the progress of the human mind. These wants we believe to be met by Unitarian Christianity, and therefore we prize it as the best friend of piety.

I have thus stated the chief grounds, on which I rest the claim of Unitarianism to the honour of promoting an enlightened, profound, and happy piety.

Am I now asked, why we prize our system, and why we build churches for its inculcation? If I may be allowed to express myself in the name of conscientious Unitarians, who apply their doctrine to their own hearts and lives, I would reply thus: We prize and would spread our views, because we believe that they reveal God to us in greater glory, and bring us nearer to him than any other. We are conscious of a deep want, which the creation cannot supply—the want of a Perfect Being, on whom the strength of our love may be centred—and of an Almighty Father, in whom our weaknesses, imperfections, and sorrows, may find resource; and such a Being and Father, Unitarian Christianity sets before us. For this we prize it above all price. We can part with every other good. We can endure the darkening of life's fairest prospects. But this bright, consoling doctrine of One God, even the Father, is dearer than life, and we cannot let it go. Through this faith, every thing grows brighter to our view. Born of such a Parent, we esteem our existence an inestimable gift. We meet every where our Father, and his presence is as a sun shining on our path. We see him in his works, and hear his praise rising from every spot which we tread. We feel him near in our solitudes, and sometimes enjoy communion with him more tender than human friendship.

We see him in our duties, and perform them more gladly, because they are the best tribute we can offer our Heavenly Benefactor. Even the consciousness of sin, mournful as it is, does not subvert our peace; for in the mercy of God, as made manifest in Jesus Christ, we see an inexhaustible fountain of strength, purity, and pardon, for all who, in filial reliance, seek these heavenly gifts.—Through this faith, we are conscious of a new benevolence springing up to our fellow creatures, purer and more enlarged than natural affection. Towards all mankind we see a rich and free love flowing from the common Parent, and touched by this love, we are the friends of all. We compassionate the most guilty, and would win them back to God. Through this faith, we receive the happiness of an ever enlarging hope. There is no good too vast for us to anticipate for the universe or for ourselves, from such a Father as we believe in. The horrible thought, of a large proportion of our fellow creatures being cast by an angry God into tortures unutterable by human tongue, and sentenced to spend eternity in shrieks of agony, which will never reach the ear or touch the heart of their Creator—this dreadful anticipation, which would shroud the universe in more than sepulchral gloom, and is enough to break every heart which is not stone—this forms no part of our conception of the purposes and government of the God and Father of Jesus Christ. Whilst we believe, that every new view of the constitution and administration of the universe, will reveal more strikingly the solemn and indissoluble connexion between sin and suffering, we have equal confidence, that God's equity and kindness towards all his creatures will be more and more triumphantly and gloriously displayed. We have an earnest of heaven, in the assurance that all things are tending to a consummation, which, however undefined and incomprehensible now, will fill the benevolent heart with unmingled joy. Through this faith, we not only hope for the universe, but hope for ourselves. We are told, indeed, that our faith will not prove an anchor in the last hour. But we have known those, whose departure it has brightened; and our experience of its power, in trial and peril, has proved it to be equal to all the wants of human nature. We doubt not, that, to its sincere followers, death will be a transition to the calm, pure, joyful mansions prepared by Christ for his disciples. There we expect to meet that great and

good Deliverer. With the eye of faith, we already see him looking round him with celestial love on all of every name, who have imbibed his spirit. *His spirit*—his loyal and entire devotion to the will of his Heavenly Father—his universal unconquerable benevolence, through which he freely gave from his pierced side his blood, his life for the salvation of the world—this divine love, and not creeds, and names, and forms, will then be found to attract his supreme regard. This spirit we trust to see in multitudes of every sect and name; and we trust, too, that they who now reproach us, will at that day recognise, in the dreaded Unitarian, this only badge of Christ, and will bid him welcome to the joy of our common Lord. I have thus stated the views, with which we have reared this building. We desire to glorify God, to promote a purer, nobler, happier piety. Even if we err in doctrine, we think, that these motives should shield us from reproach—should disarm that intolerance, which would exclude us from the church on earth, and from our Father's house in heaven.

We end, as we began, by offering up this building to the Only Living and True God. We have erected it amidst our private habitations, as a remembrancer of our Creator. We have reared it in this busy city, as a retreat for pious meditation and prayer. We dedicate it to the King and Father Eternal, the King of kings and Lord of lords. We dedicate it to his Unity—to his unrivalled and undivided Majesty. We dedicate it to the praise of his free, unbought, unmerited Grace. We dedicate it to Jesus Christ—to the memory of his love—to the celebration of his divine virtue—to the preaching of that truth which he sealed with blood. We dedicate it to the Holy Spirit—to the sanctifying influence of God—to those celestial emanations of light and strength, which visit and refresh the devout mind. We dedicate it to prayers and praises, which we trust will be continued and perfected in heaven. We dedicate it to social worship—to Christian intercourse—to the communion of saints. We dedicate it to the cause of pure morals—of public order—of equity, uprightness, and general good will. We dedicate it to Christian admonition—to those warnings, remonstrances, and earnest and tender persuasions, by which the sinner may be arrested, and brought back to God. We dedicate it to Christian consolation, to those truths which assuage sor-

row, animate penitence, and lighten the load of human anxiety and fear. We dedicate it to the doctrine of Immortality—to sublime and joyful hopes which reach beyond the grave. In a word, we dedicate it to the great work of perfecting the human soul, and fitting it for nearer approach to its Author. Here may heart meet heart. Here may man meet God. From this place may the song of praise—the ascription of gratitude—the sigh of penitence—the prayer for grace—and the holy resolve, ascend, as fragrant incense, to Heaven; and through many generations may parents bequeath to their children this house, as a sacred spot, where God had "lifted upon them his countenance," and given them pledges of his everlasting love.

Unitarian Worthies.—No. 2, John Biddle.

(Concluded from page 400.)

On these accounts, the ordinance did not, as was expected, prove fatal to Mr. Biddle. The blow which was aimed at his life, failed to reach him; yet he suffered, for several years, the miseries of a severe imprisonment. The death of Charles I. mitigated his sufferings; and Cromwell caused the repeal of all the penal laws relating to religion. In consequence, Mr. Biddle's keeper allowed him more liberty, and permitted him, upon security being given, to go into Staffordshire. He was soon traced to his retreat, recalled, and more strictly confined. During his imprisonment, he was held in abhorrence on account of the charges against him, of blasphemy; and for fear of incurring the same odium, people abstained from evincing towards him any attention, which might have lightened his captivity. Thus was this upright servant of God cut off from all the intercourses and endearments of life. Thus bigotry cancels the bonds of society, and heretical pravity—which means, your opinion and not mine—is regarded as more criminal than the most heinous act of immorality! A robber and a murderer is treated according to the rights of humanity, and is indulged with the visit of pity and condolence; but the Christian professor—acting in the very spirit of his Master—pines away unpitied and alone; and no eye of those who pretend to visit the prisoner, looks on him; and no orthodox charity is found large enough to extend the hand of compassion. But so it is,

that the cup of which the sufferer for righteousness' sake partakes, is mingled of every bitter ingredient—that his faith may be tried—his virtue exalted—his love of truth exhibited, as rising superior to every difficulty. In the experience of Mr. Biddle, poverty was added to imprisonment, and the neglect of his fellow men. To such indigence was he reduced, that he was glad when he could procure for his morning and evening meal, a draught of milk from the cow. In the year 1651, Mr. Biddle was restored to liberty; and he immediately, nothing dismayed by past endurance, opened a place for public worship. So much did it cost to commence the first Society in England, who worshipped in purity the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let the sacrifices of Mr. Biddle shame some of us, who, while we live in the possession of the truth, will not so much as move a hand to disenthral our oppressed brethren. Mr. Biddle began again to avail himself of the press, in order to promulge the truth, and published two Catechisms. These alarmed the advocates of Orthodoxy. Forthwith, severe proceedings were commenced against him. He was brought to the bar of the House of Commons, committed a close prisoner, and forbidden the use of pen, ink, and paper, and denied the access of any friend. In this case, a capital judgment was expected; yet Mr. Biddle preserved a composed and cheerful mind, and trusted in the God of Truth.

His trust did not fail him; for the Protector dissolved the Parliament, and, in consequence, Mr. Biddle was set at liberty, after ten months' imprisonment. The author had escaped; but his enemies could not endure to see works in circulation which they could not answer, and, accordingly, procured an order that they should be burned by the hands of the common hangman. Most men would think, that Mr. Biddle might, with all propriety, at length retire from the unequal contest. Such, however, was not his own sentiment. Mr. Biddle was indefatigable to promote, by every means, the doctrine according to godliness. Amongst other methods, he met in public dispute a Mr. Griffin, a considerable part of whose congregation had already adopted his views. Mr. Griffin was worsted in the argument; and another day was appointed for the resumption of the debate. But before that day came, it was found convenient to resort to other measures, for silencing this champion of truth. The adversaries of Mr.

Biddle, seized the open avowal that he had made of his opinions in the late debate—information was lodged against him—he was apprehended, and placed in the Compter; hence he was removed to Newgate, and was, at the next sessions, called to trial for his life, on the ordinance which we have before mentioned. The iniquity of this proceeding, was monstrously aggravated by its being founded on an Act which had never properly received the force of a law, and had for years lain obsolete. But the inveterate zeal of persecutors is alike forgetful of mercy and equity. Nor, that the turpitude of his wretched enemies might be of the blackest die, was he allowed the assistance of counsel, till after he had made the most strenuous exertions. But Cromwell was an enemy to persecution, he, therefore, took Mr. Biddle out of the hands of the law. The hatred of the enemies to religious liberty, however, was so strong, that Cromwell was obliged to continue him in prison. Petitions poured in upon the Protector, reprobating his lenity, and praying the execution of the law, till, at last, hoping to terminate the affair, he banished Mr. Biddle to Scilly. Disagreeable and afflictive as must have been this state of exile, it was at least an asylum from the vindictive spirit of his enemies. During the period of his expatriation, he enjoyed the divine and sacred pleasures of piety and holy meditation. His mind daily became more spiritual, and his views of Evangelical religion more enlarged and definite. At length the Protector caused him to be recalled, and set at liberty. Mr. Biddle, as if to show that his mind still bore up, nor bated one jot in heart or hope, published, on his return, his "Essay to explain the Revelation." Still did he feel the firmness of his mind, his unconquerable attachment to truth, his steady and ardent zeal. He resumed his religious duties as a minister of Christ. Various and harassing, however, were the molestations that he had to endure; till at last, in June 1662, he was haled from his home, and, with some friends, committed to prison, without the liberty of procuring bail. After much harassment, they were brought to trial. Each of his friends was fined in the penalty of £20, and Mr. Biddle himself in £100; and they were ordered to lie in prison till the fines were paid! In less than five weeks—through the noisomeness of the place, and the want of air, operating on a constitution which Orthodox rancour had already impaired—he contracted a disease which threatened his

life. And so unrelenting is bigotry, that Mr. Biddle could not procure the liberty of a short relaxation of his sufferings in order to recovery. He was doomed to remain in prison; and on the second day after, between five and six o'clock in the morning, the 22d of September, 1662, he died in the forty-seventh year of his age. Thus terminated the days of one who was cruelly tortured through life, and cruelly, at last, brought prematurely to his tomb by infuriate bigotry. The manner in which he met his dissolution, proved what he had before asserted to his friends—that he had brought himself, by frequent meditations on the resurrection, and on future happiness, to look on death with contempt. He had often before this fatal illness, intimated his assurance, that if he were again cast into prison, he should never leave it alive; yet did he continue to maintain the contest against error and bigotry. Nor was he dispirited at the thought of his approaching dissolution:—"*The work*, he said, was done." He had borne his testimony, it only remained for men to avow the truth—he had disclosed the truth, men might rejoice in it—he had seen its dissemination—he trusted in God, that the light would never be extinguished. No! thou illustrious martyr, the light that thou didst kindle in these kingdoms, has not become darkness. Like the rising sun, it has shone brighter and brighter, and will gather splendour and energy till the perfect day. Thy voice proclaiming the gospel of peace—the God of love—finds an echo in many a heart in this our land—reverberates on the shores of the Atlantic and on the banks of the Ganges, emancipates the captive and confounds the gainsayer. May we feel thy spirit, and emulate thy zeal, content to bear thy reproach, and glorying, if peradventure, we may secure thy reward! G. C. S.

Objections to Unitarian Christianity.

(Concluded from page 378.)

Another objection urged against us, is, that our system does not produce as much *zeal, seriousness,* and *piety,* as other views of religion. This objection it is difficult to repel, except by language which will seem to be a boasting of ourselves. When expressed in plain language, it amounts to this—"We Trinitarians and Calvinists, are

better and more pious than you Unitarians, and, consequently, our system is more scriptural than yours!" Now, assertions of this kind do not strike us as very modest and humble, and we believe, that truth does not require us to defend it by setting up our piety above that of our neighbours. This, however, we would say, that if our zeal and devotion are faint, the fault is our own, not that of our doctrine. We are sure that our views of the Supreme Being are incomparably more affecting and attractive, than those which we oppose. It is the great excellence of our system, that it exalts God, vindicates his paternal attributes, and appeals powerfully to the ingenuous principles of love, gratitude, and veneration; and when we compare it with the doctrines which are spread around us, which make God a despot, and religion an offering of abject fear, we feel that of all men we are most inexcusable, if a filial piety do not spring up and grow strong in our hearts.

Perhaps it may not be difficult to suggest some causes for the charge, that our views do not favour seriousness and zeal. One reason, probably, is, that we interpret with much rigour, those precepts of Christ, which forbid ostentation, and enjoin modesty and retirement in devotion. We dread a showy religion. We are disgusted with pretensions to superior sanctity, that stale and vulgar way of building up a sect. We believe that true religion speaks in actions more than in words, and manifests itself chiefly in the common temper and life; in giving up the passions to God's authority, in inflexible uprightness and truth, in active and modest charity, in candid judgment, and in patience under trials and injuries. We think it no part of piety to publish its fervours, but prefer a delicacy in regard to these secrets of the soul; and hence, to those persons, who think that religion is to be worn conspicuously and spoken of passionately, we may seem cold and dead, when, perhaps, were the heart uncovered, it might be seen to be "alive to God," as truly as their own.

Again, it is one of our principles, flowing necessarily from our views of God, that religion is *cheerful;* that where its natural tendency is not obstructed by false theology, or a gloomy temperament, it opens the heart to every pure and innocent pleasure. We do not think, that piety disfigures its face, or wraps itself in a funeral pall as its appropriate garb. Now, too many conceive of re-

ligion as something solemn, sad, and never to be named but with an altered tone and countenance; and where they miss these imagined signs of piety, they can hardly believe that a sense of God dwells in the heart.

Another cause of the error in question, we believe to be this:—Our religious system absolutely excludes those overwhelming terrors and transports, and those sudden changes of the character, which many think essential to piety. We do not believe in shaking and disordering men's understandings by excessive fear, as a preparation for supernatural grace and immediate conversion. This we regard as a dreadful corruption and degradation of religion. Religion, we believe, is a gradual and rational work, beginning ordinarily in education, confirmed by reflection, growing by regular use of Christian means, and advancing silently to perfection. Now, because we specify no time when we were overpowered and created anew by irresistible impulse—because we relate no agonies of despair, succeeded by miraculous light and joy, we are thought by some to be strangers to piety!—how reasonably, let the judicious determine.

Once more; we are thought to want zeal, because our principles forbid us to use many methods for spreading them, which are common with other Christians. Whilst we value highly our peculiar views, and look to them for the best fruits of piety, we still consider ourselves as bound to think charitably of those who doubt or deny them; and with this conviction, we cannot enforce them with that vehemence, positiveness, and style of menace, which constitute much of the zeal of certain denominations; and we freely confess, that we would on no account exchange *our charity* for *their zeal:* and we trust, that the time is near, when he who holds what he deems truth with lenity and forbearance, will be accounted *more pious* than he who compasses sea and land to make proselytes to his sect, and "shuts the gates of mercy" on all who will not bow their understandings to his creed. We fear, that in these remarks we may have been unconsciously betrayed into a self-exalting spirit. Nothing could have drawn them from us, but the fact, that a very common method of opposing our sentiments, is to decry the piety of those who adopt them. After all, we mean not to deny our great deficiencies. We have nothing to boast before God, although the cause of truth forbids us to submit to the censoriousness of our brethren.

Another objection to our views, is, that they *lead to a rejection of revelation.* Unitarianism has been pleasantly called "a half-way house to infidelity!" Now, to this objection we need not oppose general reasonings. We will state a plain fact. It is this. A large proportion of the most able and illustrious defenders of the truth of Christianity have been Unitarians; and our religion has received from them, to say the least, as important service in its conflicts with infidelity, as from any class of Christians whatever. From the long catalogue of advocates of Christianity among Unitarians, we can now select but a few; but these few are a host.—The name of John Locke is familiar to every scholar. He is revered as the father of the true philosophy of the human mind; nor is this his highest praise. His writings on government and toleration contributed more than those of any other individual, to the diffusion of free and generous sentiments through Europe and America; and perhaps Bishop Watson has not greatly exaggerated, when he says, "This great man has done more for the establishment of pure Christianity than any author I am acquainted with." He was a laborious and successful student of the Scriptures. His works on the "Epistles of Paul," and on the "Reasonableness of Christianity," formed an era in sacred literature; and he has the honour of having shed a new and bright light on the darkest parts of the New Testament, and in general on the Christian system. Now Locke, be it remembered, was a Unitarian.—We pass to another intellectual prodigy, to Newton, a name which every man of learning pronounces with reverence; for it reminds him of faculties so exalted above those of ordinary men, that they seem designed to help our conceptions of superior orders of being. This great man, who gained by intuition what others reap from laborious research, after exploring the laws of the universe, turned for light and hope to the Bible; and although his theological works cannot be compared with Locke's, yet in his illustrations of the Prophecies and of Scripture chronology, and in his criticisms on two doubtful passages,* which are among the chief supports of the doctrine of the Trinity, he is considered as having rendered valuable service to the Christian cause. Newton, too, was a Unitarian.—We are not

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1 John v. 7.—1 Tim. iii. 16.

accustomed to boast of men, or to prop our faith by great names; for Christ, and *he only*, is our master; but it is with pleasure, that we find in our ranks the most gifted, sagacious, and exalted minds; and we cannot but smile, when we sometimes hear from men and women of very limited culture, and with no advantages for enlarged inquiry, reproachful and contemptuous remarks on a doctrine, which the vast intelligence of Locke and Newton, after much study of the Scriptures, and in opposition to a prejudiced and intolerant age, received as the truth of God.

We pass to another writer, who was one of the brightest ornaments of the Church of England, and of the age in which he lived, Dr. Samuel Clarke. In classical literature and in metaphysical speculation, Dr. Clarke has a reputation which needs no tribute at our hands. His sermons are an invaluable repository of scriptural criticism; and his work on the evidences of natural and revealed religion, has ever been considered as one of the ablest vindications of our common faith. This great man was a Unitarian. He believed firmly that Jesus was a distinct being from his Father, and a derived and dependent being; and he desired to bring the Liturgy of his Church into a correspondence with these doctrines.

To those who are acquainted with the memorable infidel controversy in the early part of the last century, excited by the writings of Bolingbroke, Tindal, Morgan, Collins, and Chubb, it will be unnecessary to speak of the zeal and power with which the Christian cause was maintained by learned Unitarians. But we must pass over these, to recal a man whose memory is precious to enlightened believers; we mean Lardner, that most patient and successful advocate of Christianity; who has written, we believe, more largely than any other author, on the evidences of the Gospel; from whose works later authors have drawn as from a treasure-house; and whose purity and mildness have disarmed the severity and conciliated the respect of men, of very different views from his own. Lardner was a Unitarian.—We certainly do not say too much, when we affirm, that Unitarians have not been surpassed by any denomination, in zealous, substantial service to the Christian cause. Yet we are told, that Unitarianism leads to infidelity! We are reproached with defection from that religion, round which we have gathered in the day of its danger, and from which, we trust, persecution and death cannot divorce us.

It is indeed said, that instances have occurred of persons, who, having given up the Trinitarian doctrine, have not stopped there, but have resigned one part of Christianity after another, until they have become thorough infidels. To this we answer, that such instances are not common; but that such should occur is not improbable, and is what we even should expect; for it is natural, that when the mind has detected one error in its creed, it should distrust every other article, and should exchange its blind and hereditary assent for a sweeping scepticism. We have examples of this truth at the present moment, both in France and Spain, where multitudes have proceeded from rejecting Popery to absolute Atheism. Now, who of us will argue, that the Catholic faith is true, because multitudes who relinquished it, have also cast away every religious principle and restraint? And if the argument be not sound on the side of Popery, how can it be pressed into the service of Trinitarianism? The fact is, that false and absurd doctrines, when exposed, have a natural tendency to beget scepticism in those who received them without reflection. None are so likely to believe *too little*, as those who have begun with believing *too much*; and, hence, we charge upon *Trinitarianism*, whatever tendency may exist in those who forsake it, to sink gradually into infidelity.

Unitarianism does *not* lead to infidelity. On the contrary, its excellence is, that it fortifies faith. Unitarianism is Christianity stripped of those corrupt additions, which shock reason and our moral feelings. It is a rational and amiable system, against which no man's understanding, or conscience, or charity, or piety, revolts. Can the same be said of that system, which teaches the doctrines of three equal persons in one God, of natural and total depravity, of infinite atonement, of special and electing grace, and of the everlasting misery of the non-elected part of mankind? We believe that unless Christianity be purified from these corruptions, it will not be able to bear the unsparing scrutiny to which the progress of society is exposing it. We believe that it must be reformed, or intelligent men will abandon it. As the friends of Christianity, and the foes of infidelity, we are therefore solicitous to diffuse, what seem to us nobler and juster views of this divine system.

It was our purpose to consider one more objection to

our views, *viz.* that they give no consolation in sickness and death. But we have only room to express amazement at such a charge. What! A system, which insists with a peculiar energy on the pardoning mercy of God, on his universal and parental love, and on the doctrine of a resurrection and immortality,—such a system, unable to give comfort? It unlocks infinite springs of consolation and joy, and gives to him who practically receives it, a living, overflowing, and unspeakable hope. Its power to sustain the soul in death, has been often tried; and did we believe dying men to be inspired, or that peace and hope in the last hours, were God's seal to the truth of doctrines, we should be able to settle at once the controversy about Unitarianism.

We have thus endeavoured to meet the objections which are commonly urged against our views of religion; and we have done this, not to build up a party, but to promote views of Christianity, which seem to us particularly suited to strengthen men's faith in it, and to make it fruitful of good works and holy lives. Christian virtue, Christian holiness, Love to God and man, these are all which we think worth contending for; and these we believe to be intimately connected with the system now maintained. If in this we err, may God discover our error, and disappoint our efforts. We ask no success, but what He may approve—no proselytes, but such as will be improved and rendered happier by the adoption of our views.

REVIEW.

Keppel's Travels from India to England.

(Concluded from page 420.)

From inspecting the ruins of Babylon, Captain Keppel and his friends, proceeded to visit the Tower of Babel. The state of the country which they had to traverse, may be learned from the circumstance of their being obliged to have a party of twenty armed horsemen, to go a distance of six miles, though they had nothing except their arms, to excite the cupidity of robbers. The ruins at the first sight, present the appearance of a hill, with a castle on the top; the greater portion is covered with a light sandy soil, and it is only in ascending, that the traveller discovers he is walking on a vast heap of bricks. The appearances of

the ruins clearly indicate, that violence had been used to reduce them into their present state; and in some cases, they are completely molten—"a strong presumption, that fire was used in the destruction of the Tower,"—which in parts resembles what the Scriptures prophesied it should become, "a burned mountain."* "In the denunciations respecting Babylon, fire is particularly mentioned as an agent against it. To this Jeremiah alludes, when he says, that it should be 'as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah,' on which cities, it is said, 'the Lord rained fire and brimstone;' again, 'I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all round about him.' So literally has the Scripture been verified." He continues on the same topic, "Wild beasts were very numerous here. Mr. Lamb gave up his examination (among the ruins), from seeing an animal crouched in one of the square apertures. I saw another in a similar situation; and the large foot-print of a lion was so fresh, that the beast must have stolen away at our approach. From the summit, we had a distinct view of the vast heaps which constitute all that now remains of ancient Babylon: a more complete picture of desolation could not well be imagined. The eye wandered over a barren desert, in which the ruins were nearly the only indication that it had ever been inhabited. It was impossible to behold this scene, and not to be reminded, how exactly the predictions of Isaiah and Jeremiah have been fulfilled, even in the appearance Babylon was doomed to present—that she should 'never be inhabited'—that 'the Arabian should not pitch his tent there'—that she should 'become heaps'—that her cities should be 'a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness.' And the prophecy of Isaiah, 'that Babylon should be inhabited by wild beasts,' was fulfilled after the extinction of the Seleucidæ; for their successors, the Parthians, turned the city into a park, and stocked it with wild beasts for the purpose of hunting. Amongst these, the wild boar is enumerated. And, while we were exploring the cave, an enormous wild boar, of a reddish colour, started up from amongst the ruins."

A short time after this review of the ruins of Babylon, an incident occurred, which shows how far travelling can overcome national and religious prejudices. Captain Kep-

* Jeremiah li. 25.

pel was one of a party, composed of two Sunnis and four Shiahs, betwixt which sects exists the most violent hatred, together with two Christians [Infidels], yet they all, on the present occasion, were welcome partakers of the same meal.

The following quotation is replete with important remarks:—"There is every reason to believe, that Eastern houses are of the same form, and applied to the same purposes, as formerly. From a variety of texts of Scripture, the roof appears to have been inhabited. The expression of Isaiah, 'thou art wholly gone up to the house tops,'* evidently refers to this circumstance. It was from 'the roof of the king's house,' that David first saw Bathsheba. Samuel communed with Saul on the top of the house, and the next morning called him up to the same place, to send him away.† I have already mentioned, that at an Armenian feast, at which I was present, a large party were assembled on the terrace, to celebrate the betrothment of our host. In the same manner, a thousand Philistines met on the roof of the house, on the day of a 'great sacrifice unto Dagon their god,' and to rejoice, 'that Sampson had been delivered into their hands.' The lattice on the windows is mentioned in Holy Writ. In Solomon's Song, the bride says, 'He looketh forth at the windows, showing himself through the lattice.'‡ And the few windows that look towards the street, are covered with a frame of lattice work."

The custom of painting the eyes, with which Ezekiel, in an extraordinary chapter,‖ reproaches Jerusalem, still obtains in the East; and bracelets are now also worn as marks of sovereignty. It will be recollected, that the Amalekites brought David the bracelet found on Saul's arm, as a proof of his rank. There are frequent allusions in Scripture, to the devastations committed by locusts; and the following quotation will serve to elucidate them. "Looking towards the east, I observed an opaque body moving gradually forward. It was a flight of locusts, so large, as to have the appearance of a black cloud extending over the horizon. 'They covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened.' These winged strangers, more formidable than the banditti of

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* Isaiah xxii. 1, 2.
† 1 Samuel ix. 25, 26.
‡ Solomon's Song, iv. 9.
‖ Ezekiel xxiii. 40.

the country, had destroyed every blade of vegetation, and had turned a well-cultivated plain into a desolate waste." On another occasion, they formed a phalanx extending fifteen miles. And the only resource which the natives have against their attacks, is, noise and uproar of every species: these the inhabitants have learned, from experience, that the locusts dislike; and by these, they repulse this most destructive enemy. That in the East, as well as in the North, dissent from commonly received opinions, is a species of pravity that merits no pardon, may be learned from the following anecdote:—"I observed an old man, with a long beard, enter the room. I was struck with the marked coldness shown him by every one present; by chance, his elbow broke one of the glasses; the company seemed delighted at his having accidentally furnished them with a grievance; they simultaneously left the room, and returned with a corporal and file of the guard, to whom they gave him in charge. On inquiring, in a tone of pity, the reason for this hard usage, I was answered, that he was 'a Rascolmock,' a dissenter from the Greek Church; and, therefore," said my informer, "unworthy of your sympathy!"

We cannot conclude, without expressing the satisfaction we have felt in the perusal of this work. The style is simple and lucid; and what is of more importance, the sentiments are just, manly, and of a Christian spirit. It is pleasing to see individuals of our army, and our nobility, thus exerting themselves in promoting their own improvement, whilst they are also serving the great cause of public enlightenment and purification. G. C. S.

Sermons by Dr. Bruce of Belfast.

(Concluded from page 267.)

We have to apologise to our readers for so long delaying the conclusion of our notice of this interesting volume. It has been occasioned by the pressing and more temporary nature of other communications. We have less cause however for regret, as the Sermons have already reached a second edition, and have established themselves by their own intrinsic merit, in the good opinion of the public.

The volume is divided into three parts:—1st, Sermons on the Bible; 2d, On the Doctrines taught by our Lord;

3d, On the doctrines taught by Calvin. Under the first division, the subjects treated of are, the study of the Bible —the most profitable mode of reading it—its interpretation—the interpretation of Prophecy—and, on Mysteries. In the discourse on the interpretation of the Bible, Dr. Bruce truly remarks,

"There never was a time, when some guide on the subject of this discourse was more necessary than the present. The great majority of Christians either yield implicitly to the dictates of some authority, established in their respective churches; or perplex themselves with obscure texts, and mysterious doctrines, which they cannot pretend to understand, though they profess to believe, and labour to explain them. They addict themselves to certain leaders, who have often as little knowledge as their followers; but are enlisted in some cause, which they think important, or find to be popular and profitable. Neither teachers nor disciples of this class think it necessary to inquire after truth: they neither read nor listen to any thing that is inconsistent with their peculiar tenets, but too often hold in detestation those who question their truth. They even profess to value a doctrine the more for being incomprehensible. Many would esteem it a sin to be seen in any church different from their own; and an abomination to read a book written by one of an opposite persuasion: so that implicit faith is no longer the peculiar characteristic of the Romish communion. It is equally prevalent among Protestants of this description; and renders them equally invulnerable to reason, and inaccessible to argument."

The sermon on Mysteries contains many useful observations; we extract one paragraph:

"No man can believe farther than he has ideas. Should any one say, that he believed that of which he had no idea, I would ask him what it was that he believed? and it is manifest, that he could not tell. Were he to insist, that he believed a form of words, because it was extracted from the Word of God, or from a creed sanctioned by the Church, I should reply, that he mistook the object of his belief. He might believe in the veracity of God, or the authority of the Church; but he could not believe in the proposition concealed under these expressions, because he knew it not. He might as well believe one speaking in an unknown tongue. He can believe only so much of a doctrine as he understands. It is to be feared, however, that many pretend to this implicit faith, and even value themselves upon it, make it the essence of their creed, and consign to eternal perdition all who cannot adopt it."

"The doctrines taught by our Lord," are divided into, our Saviour's doctrine concerning God, himself, and the Holy Spirit—the pre-existence and example of Christ—and his Intercession. In these discourses, Dr. Bruce contends powerfully for the essential Oneness of God. His views on the person of Christ, are those which have usually

been termed "high Arian." He thus expresses them:—

"To conceive, that the same exalted spirit, who was employed by God in the creation of this world, has been its patron and superintendent ever since; that it was he, who walked so familiarly with the Patriarchs; who selected the posterity of Abraham by Isaac, as a chosen people, for the preservation of Divine truth; and who conducted the Mosaical economy, under the appellation of the Angel of the Covenant; that through him, as the Messiah, eternal life is bestowed on all, in every age and country, 'who fear God, and work righteousness;' and that he will collect all those, in the kingdom of heaven;—is a view of providence and grace, equally simple and grand."

He acknowledges, however, that, "as these facts have not been expressly revealed, they should not be enforced as forming an indubitable article of faith." Consistently enough with this declaration, the amount of proof adduced in the subsequent sermon, as the account which our Lord gives of his existence during "the time antecedent to his appearance in the world," is, to our minds, totally insufficient on which to build up such an opinion. The Holy Spirit, Dr. Bruce conceives to be "a separate intelligence, in subservience to Christ, occupied in forwarding the work of salvation after his departure."

Under the last head, Dr. Bruce discourses on predestination, election and reprobation, original sin, the atonement, universal redemption, and future punishment. The sermons on atonement and reconciliation through Christ, we have been much pleased with. They contain a fund of admirable Scripture reference and explanation, and are, we think, the most useful and most instructive of the volume.

In a note, page 184, Dr. Bruce affirms, "The Trinitarians and Socinians are always at variance with one another, and with the original text or translation, and value themselves on verbal criticisms, various readings, and philological disquisitions."—"There are two texts, in particular, on which the nature of the Supreme Being, and the redemption of mankind, are thought to depend;—Rom. ix. 5, and [1] Tim. iii. 16." Remarking on the texts which speak "directly of the existence of Christ previous to his incarnation," Dr. Bruce says, page 199, "The same perversion of meaning, which has been attempted with respect to some of these texts, would extract any meaning from any set of words, that would best suit the purpose of the critic." Again, page 208, "The doctrine of

the pre-existence is so clearly and repeatedly declared in various parts of Scripture, that it can hardly be contested without an undue degree of critical refinement. Those who deny it, seem to me to be at continual variance with both revelations; to be continually fencing with the Word of God, parrying and warding off the most direct and pointed texts." We are persuaded these passages must have been penned without Dr. Bruce's usual calmness and deliberation. They savour too much of the old leaven, to be the genuine expression of the feelings of the consistent free inquirer. They convey charges and insinuations which Dr. Bruce cannot substantiate. As far as Unitarians are concerned, we deny their validity, and challenge the proof. Surely those who believe what Moses prophesied, that the Messiah should be a prophet, of his brethren, like unto him; who hold with Peter, when fresh illuminated by the Spirit of truth, that "Jesus of Nazareth is a Man approved of God;" who contend with Paul, that the Mediator is "the Man Christ Jesus;" that the Judge of the world, will be the "Man" whom God has ordained for that solemn and all-important purpose; who bow implicitly to the declaration of their Lord and Master, that he is "a Man who told the truth which he had heard of God;"—surely those who believe these plain sayings, cannot with justice be taunted as Scripture fencing-masters, because they explain obscure and metaphorical passages by these clear and positive declarations. Scripture criticism we do indeed value, and all who value the knowledge and blessedness of God's truth, must value it likewise; they only can depreciate it, who feel that its searchings will unravel that web of mystery in which education and custom and fashion have entangled them. But we do not therefore think, that either "the nature of the Supreme Being, and the redemption of mankind," or any other doctrine essential to man's improvement and happiness, depend on two, or two hundred texts. The general tenor of Scripture, interpreted by the volume of nature, and by common sense, should be the guide of every man in his inquiry after the truth as it is in Jesus.

There is still another passage which we cannot pass without animadversion. From page 199 to 203, is exhibited a melancholy specimen of misapprehension. Because Dr. Bruce "can assign wise motives for the appearance of the Messiah in a lowly and obscure condition," and feels his

inability to give equally valid ones for the truth of Philip's declaration, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph," he, therefore, decides it to be untrue;—cannot persuade himself that the prophecies "apply to a mere man," and in a strain of ridicule which falls on the Scriptures, not on those at whom it is aimed, proceeds to his conclusion, that the pre-existence of Christ "was indispensable to his offices as a Mediator, a Redeemer, and a Judge." Let our readers contrast the sayings of Peter, Paul, Moses, and Christ, with those of Dr. Bruce; and then let them decide as to the "indispensable" necessity for which he contends. The passage, however, to which we chiefly object, is this:—

"Contrast with this that scheme of redemption, which supposes him to be an obscure villager, and nothing more, from his birth to his exaltation at the right hand of God; to his receiving a name, at which all creation should bow; to his being invested with all power, and being appointed Judge of all; and all this as a reward for his humility, the humility of a mere man; and it will easily appear, which scheme is most consonant to reason as well as to Scripture."

"That scheme of redemption!" What scheme? The one which the Doctor's imagination has shadowed out to him? He may triumph over that, and welcome, for we do not believe it to be one entertained by any disciple of Jesus; but if by the contrast he draws, he means to portray the "scheme of redemption" usually entertained by Unitarians—truth obliges us to say, that the Doctor knows not our opinions, and has therefore unintentionally, we are persuaded, defamed them. Unitarians do not believe Jesus Christ to have been a mere man.

The postscript to this volume, we confess, surprised us. Were it true, that the questions on which Christian Unitarians differ from their brethren of other persuasions, were either "insignificant or unintelligible," as Dr. Bruce affirms, certainly it would be well that he, and all of us, had "done with controversy." But the 430 previous pages of the volume on which we are remarking, too powerfully convince us, that those questions are neither "insignificant" nor "unintelligible." Those questions involve in them all that is dear to man—all that is sacred in Deity. It is only controversy that can rouse the human mind to a sense of their vast importance, and the necessity of forming individual judgment upon them. Dr. Bruce's volume

we think calculated to do this in many important respects. With the few exceptions we have felt it our duty to point out, we regard it as a powerful testimony to free inquiry; and trust, that in Ireland especially, it will be the herald of other advocates, of what Sir Isaac Newton truly denominated "the glorious and long lost truth," of the undivided and essential Oneness of the Almighty.

The Doctrine of the Trinity founded neither on Scripture, nor on reason and common sense, but on tradition and the infallible Church: an Essay occasioned by a late Controversy between the Rev. Richard T. P. Pope, and the Rev. Thomas Maguire. By William Hamilton Drummond, D. D.—J. Hodgson, Belfast; Hodges and M'Arthur, Dublin; and R. Hunter, London.

Our readers probably are aware, that, some little time since, a public disputation was conducted in Ireland between the Rev. R. T. P. Pope, on behalf of the Established Church, and the Rev. T. Maguire, on the part of the Catholics. The discussion continued several days, and its substance has since been published. In the course of the controversy, the Catholic advocate very justly and sensibly remarked, that there were several doctrines maintained by the Protestants, which could only be defended by an appeal to an infallible church. The Trinity was instanced, Mr. Maguire observing, "The Socinian's objections are solid and stubborn. He has reason and common sense on his side. He will quote text against text, enjoying, as he does, the latitude of private judgment, till not a single shred of argument remains." We thank Mr. Maguire for this admission; and we are satisfied, that the more the subject is canvassed, the more general will this conviction become.

In the meantime, the Rev. Dr. Drummond, the esteemed Pastor of one of the societies of Presbyterians in Dublin, has availed himself of this statement, to direct the attention of the public to the important subject of the Trinity. In the masterly pamphlet, whose title we have placed at the head of this article, and which is appropriately dedicated to the luminaries of the east and west, Rammohun Roy and Dr. Channing, Dr. Drummond has very properly confined himself to the defence and illustration of those

principles, in which all who believe the essential Oneness of Deity are agreed. Having stated what is Unitarianism, the Dr. proceeds to inquire, "What is Trinitarianism?"

"*What is Trinitarianism?* The Scriptures are silent. They never present God under any aspect but that of unity. Of a plurality of persons in the godhead they know nothing. We must, therefore, turn for information to the 'Infallible Church,' and to those other churches which, having thrown off her yoke, still adhere to her creeds—from the assembly of the disciples at Jerusalem to the councils of fathers—from Paul, the inspired Apostle, to Athanasius, the factious and turbulent ecclesiastic.

"The doctrine of the Trinity, then, informs us, that the godhead consists of three persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. Now, any man, under the influence of such vulgar principles as 'reason and common sense,' would conclude, that three persons must mean three distinct beings, and consequently, that there are three Gods. This Dr. Sherlock candidly admits, and says, 'it is plain the persons are perfectly distinct. A person is an intelligent being; and to say there are three divine persons, and not three distinct infinite minds, is both heresy and nonsense." Here then is palpable polytheism, from which, thus fairly exhibited, even orthodoxy recoils astounded. Dr. South, scandalized by such an admission, from a Doctor of his own church, showers down upon him a torrent of theological vituperation; and alleges, that there is only 'one infinite mind, with three modes, attributes, or offices, manifested under the different states or relations of Father, Son, and Spirit.' Thus the meaning of the word person is explained away; and after the most painful struggles against the conviction of their own minds, that God is one, the most eminent divines are reduced to the necessity of maintaining, that the three persons of their imaginary Trinity are not persons, but something else. Tillotson calls them 'three differences'—Burnet, 'three diversities'—Secker, 'three subsistences'—others, 'three postures'—and Le Clerc thought them to be 'three distinct cogitations'—and that the subject might be explained by the philosophy of Des Cartes. Some are for a specific, some for a numerical unity, and others for both united, though involving a monstrous contradiction. Waterland speaks of a 'threefold generation of the Son, two antemundane, and one in the flesh. The substance of the one person,' he says, 'is not the substance of either of the others, but different, however, of the same kind or united.' Barrow speaks of 'the mutual inexistence of one in all, and all in one.' 'They are joined together,' says another, 'by a perichoresis—and this perichoresis, circumincession, or mutual inexistence, is made very possible and intelligible by a mutual conscious sensation.' We sometimes find the same Trinitarian Divine confuting himself, for error is always inconsistent, and maintaining in one part of his writings, propositions that subvert those which he has maintained in another. Thus, Bishop Bull, against the Arians, asserts the consubstantiality and coeternity of Christ with the Father: But against the Tritheists and Sabel-

lians, 'he argueth the necessity of believing the Father to be the fountain, original, and principle of the Son, and that the Son is hence *subordinate* to the Father!"* What is this but Unitarianism?—We are told of a Ciceronian, a Platonic, an Aristotelian, and a Swedenborgian Trinity, and finally, 'the Trinity of the *Mobile*, or common people and lazy divines, who content themselves by calling it an inconceivable mystery!'"†

The excellent author proceeds to examine the various texts adduced by Mr. Pope, to prove the Deity of Christ, to which he replies with great clearness and power of illustration. We regret we have not space for the insertion of some of these admirable expositions. We trust, however, it will induce our readers the more eagerly to procure the Essay itself. After giving a rational and scriptural explanation of the talismanic term, mystery, Dr. Drummond says,

"Mystery is a being of mägical power in theology, a reconciler of absurdities, and the inseparable companion of priestcraft, fanaticism, and superstition. She would willingly be received as a descendant of the skies; but in features, dress, manners, and language, she betrays more of an origin from below. There is no spark of heaven in her eye. She wants the cloudless brow, and the voice of celestial music. Her mantle is a pall, and she wears an amulet of dead men's bones. Truth, the real daughter of heaven, delights to walk abroad in the full blaze of day; but mystery 'loves darkness better than light, because her deeds are evil. 'She creeps into her labyrinths of woods and caves, to mutter her spells, and pore over her hieroglyphics; while reason is reading the attributes of God in the volume of nature, in the starry letters of the firmament, and the luminous page of inspiration. Mystery detests such words as reason and common sense, and calls them carnal and unchristian. She deems it presumptuous to utter them along with her 'peculiar doctrines,' which are a tissue of paradoxes, contradictions, and impossibilities—and gladly would she exclude them, by an *index expurgatorius*, from all pious vocabularies. Over the weak, the ignorant, and all whom the prejudices of custom and education have subjected to her control, she exercises a tyrannical domination. But men who know and dare to assert their rights, will neither be silenced nor spellbound by her terrors. They burst into the unhallowed circle which she draws around her, and with the light of reason and of gospel truth, dispel the mists in which she is shrouded, and expose her impositions to the scorn they merit.

"Was not *Mystery* the name inscribed on the forehead of the woman in the Revelations—who was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus?"

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* Nelson's Life of Bull, p. 303. † Ben Mordecai.

The reasons which the author assigns for the rejection of Trinitarianism, from page 46 to 53, are, to our minds, irresistible; and we would fain hope will have a great effect in subduing the prejudices so generally entertained on this doctrine. His delineation of the tendency and unspeakable value of Unitarianism, bears on it the stamp of truth; clearly evincing, that it is the reflected image of a mind that has experienced its moral power, and a heart that has deeply imbibed its sanctifying loveliness. "What," he asks with all the eloquence of religious feeling,

"What but the strongest conviction can bind them to their unpopular belief? Overcome that conviction: prove to their satisfaction, that they are in a wrong path, and they will join the many who have entered by the broad gate, and are crowding along the royal highway. Show them a religion, with credentials from heaven, more beautiful and more easily comprehended than their own; more influential on human conduct; and more adapted to the wants, the hopes, the wishes, and all the lofty and holy aspirings of the immortal soul; and be assured, they are not such enemies to their own good as to refuse its adoption. They stand on the right of private judgment, and this right with them is not a name but a reality."

The Articles of the Church of England assert, indeed, that "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." The Church of Scotland repeats nearly the same language; and even the Synod of Ulster *once* responded to the sound. Dr. Drummond shows, with great felicity of expression, how they keep the word of promise to the ear, but break it to the hope and expectations of man:

"Much is said and written now-a-days in behalf of this right, particularly by some of those who are endeavouring to proselyte the Church of Rome. Mr. Maguire seems to contemplate many of their declarations respecting it as a complete fallacy. For they allow the right to be exercised only, till it leads to the rejection of the Papal authority, and then it must cease. The Church of Rome herself allows a similar right, 'till you have adopted her as your spiritual guide; and from that instant, your right is no more. Your understanding has performed its office, and is thenceforth, as some worn-out or hurtful instrument, to be thrown away! You have seen enough, and must quietly submit to have your eyes put out! The process of some of our reformers is not very dissimilar. They not only allow, they imperatively insist on, the frequent perusal of the Scriptures. But then you must read them with the spectacles of Athanasius, or Calvin; or should

you happen to take a glance with your own eyes, and get more expanded views of the perfections of God and his divine dispensations, you are immediately stigmatized as a leper and heretic! You must be cut off from 'the covenanted mercies of God,' and doomed to dwell for ever in that dire abode, over whose gate is written,—'All hope abandon ye who enter here!'"

Mr. Pope, with the usual inconsistency of the advocates of Protestant corruptions, "trusts that the result of his discussion with Mr. Maguire may be, that we shall throw *the Fathers* overboard, and sailing in the ark of the living God, the Holy Scriptures, launch out upon the great ocean of religious truth." Dr. Drummond avails himself very happily of this suggestion of Mr. Pope's, and proposes that

"Along with the Fathers, in order to render the bark light and buoyant, he would throw out their whole offspring, both spurious and legitimate—the Westminster Confession of Faith—the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds—a thousand folios of Scholastic Divinity and dogmatic Theology—huge bales of Magazines, falsely entitled Evangelical, all war-denouncing ecclesiastical "Charges" —reams of declamations against good works—the sanctimonious cant by which fortunes and titles, with the 'silly women' appended to them, are led captive—the impious declarations of fanatics, that nature is under the curse of God; and their uncharitable invectives against their neighbours, misnamed sermons, and headed with the appropriate text, 'curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof.' Let all such trumpery be 'shouldered' and shovelled out. Down let it sink, ten thousand fathoms deep. As long as it remains on board, it will impede the motion of the vessel, embarrass the movements of those who should work her, and keep up the continual cry of danger."

We hail this publication with the greatest possible pleasure. It is a noble offering at the shrine of individual judgment and Bible-Christianity. May it rouse our brethren in Ireland, to a sense of the paramount duty and necessity of buckling on the armour of a righteous and fearless profession, of what they deem to be truth. Leaving discussions on minor and less important subjects, let them combine for the promulgation and defence of the doctrines of One only God, and his unbounded goodness—that Jesus Christ is his well-beloved Son, and the Saviour of the world—and that the spirit of Christ is the spirit of unfeigned charity—and the triumph of truth over error will assuredly be accelerated. Dr. Drummond has truly said, "All who do not embrace the doctrine of the Trinity, are ranked by their opponents in one class; and whether they be Arians or nicknamed Socinians, are all alike said to be infected with leprosy and heresy." "There are times and

occasions when silence would be criminal; and being considered as denoting either a want of confidence in the truth, or of ability to defend it, might seem to give sanction and currency to error." The present we take to be such times. A fearful responsibility now attaches itself to the Unitarians of Ireland. The path of duty is before them. Rugged it may be; but the crown of righteousness will be their reward, who tread it with Christian firmness and integrity.

The admirable appeal of Dr. Drummond to his brethren, we cannot but insert. May it prove successful.

"Let Unitarianism profit by the concessions which have been granted to her, and come forth in her panoply of Truth, conquering and to conquer. A new and a brighter era in her history has arrived. Men of learning, piety, and first-rate talents, are beginning to exalt their voice most audibly in her behalf. Her doctrine is making progress in England. It has passed the Tweed, and is forcing its way in Scotland. Glasgow, one of the darkest dens of Calvinism, has sent forth able 'Pioneers' to prepare her way, and they are laying a bright and trenchant axe to the root of the tree of corruption. Ireland has felt her tread from North to South. The young man of Bandon has stood boldly forth as her champion; and the sage of Belfast has advocated her cause with a force of argument, an elegance of style, and a knowledge of Scripture worthy of the reprobation of Calvinism. Dublin sleeps; but she may, perhaps, be awakened, and goaded and lashed into activity. She could boast of an Emlyn once; an Emlyn who, with a spirit like that of the ancient martyrs, dared to stand alone and assert his faith, in defiance of cruel persecution, the fine and the gaol. In our own time, CATHOLICUS VERUS has spoken with a voice most sweet and eloquent. Would that it were raised again to a higher note, and, like a trumpet, make the welkin ring!

Abroad, Unitarianism is spreading like the light of heaven. The mountains and valleys of Switzerland are re-echoing her hallelujahs. The erudite Brahmin in the East has commenced her hosannah. But we must turn to the land beyond the Western Ocean, to the land of the learned and pious Channing, to see how she can triumph when she has an open arena, and is not opposed by fashion, worldly interests, and those inveterate prepossessions of custom and education, which chain men to Popery and Calvinism in Europe. Half a century has not elapsed, since she could not boast of more than one congregation in that great division of the globe—now it is almost all her own; for in that new world, the prejudices of Europe do not find any appropriate soil. There, the religious mind has room to expand, unchecked by the noxious influences of established error. There, Trinitarianism can take no lasting root. It is fast withering away, and will soon be known only by name; 'for every plant,' said our blessed Lord, 'which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.' All America is turning to the worship of the one only living and true God.

"Such intelligence is exhilarating to the friends of true religion at home. Let them not despair. The great Reformation has commenced; and if they will lend their aid, it will go prosperously forward. The authors of the last Reformation only half executed their task. They did much, but more remains to be done. They did all that could reasonably be expected of men emerging from profound night, and awakening from a lethargic slumber. But their vision, long habituated to darkness, could not bear the full radiance of gospel truth. They still hovered on the confines of their ancient haunts. They wanted the eagle eye and the eagle pinion that could sustain and direct them, in more elevated flights towards the sun of righteousness. It is left to men of the present and coming age to complete the task which they began; to establish the doctrine of the Divine Unity, and make the religion of the Bible the only religion in the world."

THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

Glasgow, *August* 1, 1827.

Synod of Ulster.—On Tuesday the 26th June, the Annual Assembly of the Ministers and Elders composing this portion of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, was held at Strabane. The Rev. Dr. Wright of Anahilt, the Moderator of the preceding meeting, delivered an eloquent discourse on Christian benevolence, from Col. iii. 16. The Synod being constituted by prayer, the Rev. J. S. Reid of Carrickfergus was chosen Moderator. On the Rev. Mr. Orr of Portaferry reading the minute, "that Mr. Porter be continued Clerk," Mr. Magill of Antrim addressed the assembly. Having read from the Fourth Report of the Commissioners of Irish Education, the following evidence given by Mr. Porter, the Clerk to the Synod:—"Will you have the goodness to state whether you are a person of Arian or Orthodox principles?—I set out in life with Orthodox sentiments; but, upon mature reflection, I was led to change those sentiments, and I am what is usually called an Arian. * * * I think more young men of New-light (Arian) sentiments come from Glasgow College, than I have known to be reared in the Institution; I account for this by supposing that Orthodox sentiments being the popular sentiments, and the creed of young men who pass through the Belfast Seminary being more open to public inspection, they are more under a temptation to avoid the means of imbibing sentiments which may mar their success in life, or to suppress those sentiments if they have formed them. Amongst us, what is called Orthodoxy seems of late to be taking the lead of Arianism. In my opinion, there are more real Arians than professed ones amongst us. Arianism being an unpopular doctrine, I have no hesitation in saying, that our Ministers, in general, are not fond of avowing it."

Mr. Magill continued, and complimented Mr. Porter for his readiness in giving his evidence; and expressed his anxiety that the mind of man should be left "free as the wind;" but he regretted that this body should have been wounded through the effects of Mr. Porter's evidence. He said that he was the sincere friend of the Belfast Institution; and regretted that it had been wounded *through the Arianism of the Synod; and not by Arianism in itself.* "It would appear," said he, "that we have Arians in this body; more real than professed ones. In the name of Christ, let us see who are these masked characters, who hide themselves in the waters of infidelity. It had been said, 'they were few in number;'—the 'thinking few.' He trusted they would be few indeed; like some poisonous plants, which, though placed at the distance of a thousand miles from each other, yet withered and destroyed all around them." Mr. Magill then inquired for the Arian Creed; and compared a High Arian and Low Arian, to a high-way and low-way robber—for they robbed the Son of the Eternal God of his Crown of Glory!! He contrasted the Minutes of the Synod of 1824, with the assertion that Arian principles had been progressive since 1726; and proceeded to inquire, by what spiritual free-masonry these Arians knew each other? For, it appears that our Clerk is their grand master! After stating, that unless he were to raise up his voice in the cause of the Holy Gospel of the Lord Jesus, he could not enjoy the repose of his pillow; and that this being the first time an Arian had avowed himself to be such in this Assembly, we should view it like the fabled Salamander, and crush it. He made some allusion to the people of India, Africa, and the South Seas, fixing their eyes on the Synod of Ulster; and proceeded to move, that "Mr. Porter, having avowed himself an Arian before the Commissioners of Irish Education Inquiry, be no longer continued Clerk to the body." It was seconded, without comment, by the Rev. Mr. Simpson of Dublin.

Dr. Wright of Anahilt, expressed his sorrow that the motion had been made; protested against Arian principles; eulogised Mr. Porter's fidelity as a Clerk to this body; expressed his regret that Mr. Porter had been compelled to give evidence; advocated the propriety and honesty of his telling the truth, when he was on his oath; and concluded by moving, that "though the Synod highly disapprove of, and disavow, Arian principles, yet as Mr. Porter has always faithfully discharged his duty as Clerk, he shall be retained in his office."—This being seconded,

Mr. Henry Montgomery rose, and avowed himself an Arian; and expressed his willingness that any one should take up his avowal, and deal with him as might be deemed right. Until some one had procured a patent of infallibility, he had as good a right to maintain his opinions, as others had to state theirs. Whilst some Ministers of this body think it right to join the Clergy of the Established Church, and are assisting them in their labours of conversion; and whilst ministers of both are constantly urging on their Roman Catholic brethren the right of *free inquiry*, —surely it would be only common honesty to grant him what

they were offering to others. These measures, now proposed, were calculated to lead to absolute Popery in the Presbyterian Church. He spoke with the highest respect of his Roman Catholic brethren,—no one could mistake his meaning; but it was the *principle* he referred to. He then read from the Synod's Code an extract:—"it is the right and duty of every man to read and examine the Scriptures;" and contended, that even the Jews were invited by Christ and his Apostles, to read and examine the Scriptures. We have but one Lord and Master, even Christ Jesus; and shall the Synod of Ulster usurp his place, and deprive us of what Christ freely gave even to the unbelievers of his day? If, therefore, either the example or the instructions of Christ were to be regarded, he could see no grounds for the Synod adopting the motion. He spoke of Mr. Porter's talents, honesty, purity of heart, and uprightness of life; and asked what crime he had been guilty of? "We are not," said Mr. Montgomery, "charging him with any dereliction of duty, as our Clerk; but we are about to punish him for having, when on his oath before a Parliamentary Commission, honestly professed what he believed to be the truth. We are about to affix a stigma on him, for his honesty! Oh, fathers and brethren, is this the conduct of the followers of Christ? Pause, before you so commit yourselves, as preachers of Christian mercy and peace among men." He felt no personal anxiety about the issue of the question; but it was for the character of the Synod he was alarmed. He referred to the secret measures which had been adopted against Mr. Porter; condemned the vulgar and low humour exhibited on this occasion, and asked, Would any member of this body use his common servant in this way?—would he turn him out of doors without an hour's notice? Surely, then, the Synod would not use a brother Minister worse than they would a common servant. The manner of the thing proved the malignity of the spirit in which it was engendered. Mr. Montgomery then put some questions to Mr. Magill, regarding his having consulted with Lord Ferrard on this subject; and it appeared that Mr. Magill had been in possession of a copy of Mr. Porter's evidence on the second Tuesday of May; but he had not given Mr. Porter any notice of his intention to bring forward the present motion. Mr. Montgomery then went on to observe, that it would be well if the Clergymen and Members of the Established Church would purify themselves, before they cast a stigma on us. He lamented the aspect of affairs in this Synod; and asked why Mr. Porter should be punished for doing what Mr. Cooke had done? Mr. Montgomery then read from the Education Report, the following evidence of the Rev. T. Cooke: "What is the total number of Ministers belonging to the Synod of Ulster? —I think, taking in Ministers and Assistants, it would be about 200.—Of that number of 200, what portion should you suppose hold the Arian doctrines?—I have not been able to estimate forty; about thirty-five. I think that was the most, upon a special personal examination of the Sect of the Synod, and very few of those would be willing to acknowledge it; it is known by defect rather than declaration.—Can you assign any reason why persons of the

rich, and upper, and better class are more disposed towards Arianism than others?—I could not give a decided reason; but I think one reason has always been, that the Ministers called the Oldlights, were always most disposed for enforcing strict Church discipline." You accuse Mr. Porter of bringing a charge of hypocrisy against you, and yet Mr. Cooke had done the same thing twelve months before. In the name of consistency, what do you mean? It is now a century and a year since you drove out one portion of your body; and you are now about to offer a moral stigma on your character, which ages cannot remove. Mr. Porter was a civil officer, paid by Government; and this body had no right to interfere in an ecclesiastical manner, and punish him for matters of opinion:—on these grounds, he opposed the motion.

Mr. Porter then said, that his personal feelings dictated that he should have remained silent; but this might be construed into disrespect. He denied, that the present motion had been rashly made; and said, that for many years it had been in a state of concoction. He said, that these were not random assertions; for there were gentlemen in the house who had been solicited to join in the cabal against him. Still, however, as the season drew near, courage began to fail. It was found that no effective strength could be collected. The good work was, of course, necessarily delayed, till a more convenient season; and the mortification of seeing Mordecai the Jew seated at the King's gate, had to be a little longer endured! He said, the season for the attack had at length arrived; and although some were dissatisfied with him on account of religion, and some on account of politics, yet he felt satisfied, the whole of the present proceedings had their origin in personal hostility. Mr. Magill and Mr. Simpson are mere tools in the hands of designing men. Mr. Porter felt assured that his political feelings had their share in producing the present procedure; and that his advocacy of Roman Catholic Emancipation had been partly instrumental in producing the present motion; and entered his protest against the unjust and ungenerous principle, that he was to be held accountable, as their Clerk, for any thing not illegal or dishonourable, which he might conceive himself called on to say, or do, as a freeborn Irishman. He declared himself favourable to Catholic Emancipation; and protested against being made a victim to a party, for having merely avowed himself friendly to a measure, which had, on three several occasions, received the stamp of the Synod's approbation. The present procedure against him could hardly originate in that; and as to the prejudice which may exist against him, on account of his religious sentiments, he had Mr. Cooke's authority for stating, that he held those sentiments with between thirty and forty members of the body. Differences in opinion had long existed; and he would not insult the body by supposing, that so long as it retains Arians in communion, they would exclude them from offices of ecclesiastical emolument. The Synod had chosen for its Moderators, Dr. Campbell, Dr. Crawford, Dr. Nelson, Dr. Dickson, Mr. Cuming (who was Mr. Porter's immediate predecessor in the Clerkship),

Mr. Shaw, Mr. Bankhead, Mr. Dunlop, Dr. Wm. Nelson, and Dr. Malcom, who were all deceased; he would not name the living man, of New-light sentiments, who had been chosen to fill our chair, as it might be considered invidious; but as the Moderator is a spiritual or ecclesiastical office, and as men of these sentiments have been chosen to that office, without detriment to the religious character of the body, surely the secular office of Clerkship cannot be injurious. But the salary, the money to be derived from the situation,—that is the rub against the grain, which has set on end Ministers' sanctimonious bristles. They admit men of openly acknowledged New-light principles to ministerial communion, and places of spiritual trust, but are quite horrified at the idea of appointing a person of that description to a civil situation, if it happens to be lucrative! Mr. Porter contended that the situation of Clerk was always held during life or good behaviour; and although the words "Mr. such-a-one continued Clerk," were annually printed, yet he challenged any one to show that they were not words of mere form. On this consideration, he had been appointed to the office; and if fidelity has hitherto been regarded as the tenure by which the situation is to be held; and if the adoption of a different principle be now contemplated, then, Mr. P. contended, the Synod was bound, as men of honour and fairness, to give him timely warning of the intended innovation. Even those who had brought forward this motion, had not the candour or manliness to apprise him of the meditated attack; and he called on persons present to say whether the Synod had not been *secretly* searched for support—but he had solicited no man's vote; he relied on the honour of the Synod of Ulster. Should he be removed from the office, the loss would fall on him and his family; but the disgrace would remain with the body. He had done nothing of which he should be ashamed; his religious opinions were as well known to his brethren the day they appointed him to office, as they were at the present moment. He had practised no deception, he had betrayed no trust, nor would he bend his body to one unmanly stoop, nor his spirit to one unworthy concession. Should the Synod's confidence be now withdrawn from him, he should ever regret the privation; for their confidence was a possession which he prized most highly; but he had no retractation to make; no time-serving apology to offer. For eleven years he had officiated as their Clerk: with what ability, it was not for him to determine; but he would say, that with greater fidelity those duties never had, nor ever would be discharged.

Mr. Elder, sen. said, that he had voted for Mr. Porter to be appointed Clerk; but he did not then know he was an Arian. From the time he saw the Minutes of the Education Commission Inquiry, he had changed his opinion. He said he could not look on an Arian as a brother; because the Arian denied that the Lord Jesus was God over all! Mr. Elder then quoted a long list of texts of Scripture in support of his peculiar opinions; and went on to lament the present state of the Synod—imploring it to consider in what light it must be looked on by Government! We

are, said he, a body of Non-Subscribers; and whilst subscription has waned, Arianism has been gaining ground. Dr. Bruce has said it was gaining ground in the Synod: Mr. Porter has avowed the same; and, therefore, he (Mr. E.) must join in voting him out of the Clerkship. He had been forty-seven years a member; he might never again be heard in the assembly; and he would, therefore, now raise up his warning voice, and implore them to purge Arianism out of the Synod; for as the cause of Arianism increased, the cause of the Lord Jesus declined! He lamented to hear two members of this body declare themselves Arians; and deplored the state of their congregations. If the Synod allowed them longer to remain in it, they would infect the whole body; and we can never expect to enjoy the glorious blessings of eternal joy through the Everlasting Head of our Church! For, should we remain as we are, how dreadful must be our situation, at the great Day of Judgment, before the Throne of the Most High, and in the congregation of Saints and Angels!

Mr. Cooke had heard much about the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Before God, he could not silently stand by and contemplate a unity of the spirit between men who assert Christ to be a mere man, or a little more than a mere man, and those who believe him to be the Eternal Son of God, the Supreme God over all. What unity can there be between the man who looks on Jesus Christ as an exalted angel, and he who worships him as the Supreme and Divine Head of the Christian Church, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace? Can persons who hold such different opinions about the means of eternal salvation, hold the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace? No, never. Let us withdraw from them; that we may, in sincerity and in truth, give unto our Lord and Master, even the Lord Jesus, that divine homage without which there can be no unity of the spirit. Let us divide, and let Lot's flock take the right bank of the Jordan, and Abraham's the left—but, in God's name, divide our flocks.

Mr. S. Dill said he should deem himself unworthy of the character of a preacher of the word of his Divine Master, if he did not stand forward, and bear testimony to certain doctrines of the Christian religion. Though he felt no desire to tyrannise over the minds of men—for opinion should be free as the wind—yet great care should be taken of the religious qualifications of the members of this body. Liberality has too long been the watch-word of scepticism; and he much doubted whether the liberality now contended for, did not partake of that character. He contended, that Calvinism and Arianism could not both be the doctrine of the Scriptures; for the poles cannot be more opposite than they are. Therefore, Arians and Calvinists should neither worship in the same temple, nor give each other the right hand of fellowship. In fact, they do not worship the same God; for, if any doctrine be more clearly revealed in the Scriptures than another, it is, that Christ is God!! Christ is the corner-stone of our religion; remove it, and the entire fabric tumbles into ruin.

Dr. Hanna had yesterday breathed a sigh, to think, that, of late,

this Synod can never meet without a constant recurrence of such unpleasant and distracting discussions; and it should be borne in mind, that when Mr. Porter gave his evidence, he was on his oath. Mr. Porter is a man, of whom all who know him have the highest opinion; and we must give him the fullest credit for his talents as a Clerk to this body, and for his best intentions to do his duty faithfully. But, it appears, that the present charge is not on account of his incorrectness as a Clerk, but because he has avowed himself to be an Arian. In such circumstances, it might be well that a measure were brought forward to clear this body of the charge of Arianism; and this he would not object to. Allusions have also been made to dividing the Synod: he deprecated all such attempts, as calculated to increase the very thing they wished to destroy. Drive the Arians from amongst you, or withdraw from them, and you are adopting the very way of establishing and confirming Arianism. Gentlemen who wanted to purify the body, should recollect that division is not the way. He was satisfied, that Arianism was dying a natural death! and he wished for some measure to be adopted, more agreeable to him than the motion or amendment, which would clear the Synod from the charge made against it, of countenancing Arianism.

Mr. Stewart of Broughshane said, it was the first time he had ever heard of a body dead to its reputation and character; for we ought to use our best endeavours to stand well in the opinion of Government, from which we receive so great support! Indeed, of late years, Government has paid more than ordinary attention to this body; and perhaps the very examination of our Clerk, was in consequence of its anxiety to become better acquainted with us!!

Mr. John Orr said, that the meeting would do well to recollect, that there was a much larger attendance of ministers and elders from the neighbourhood of Strabane, than from the other districts in which the members of this body reside. For example, the county of Down was not fairly represented: on this account, the Synod should pause before passing a measure, which involved the character of the entire body.

Mr. Campbell of Templepatrick, believed it was the influence of the *Regium Donum* which led to this discussion; that was the apple of discord which was thrown into this body. He referred to the change which had taken place in some men's minds, relative to Mr. Porter; and attributed it to another cause than the operations of conscience. He believed some were operated on by a desire to please their people, and a love of popularity; and he knew of others who had changed their opinions through other motives than the love of God. He knew members who had no objection to give to an Arian the right hand of fellowship; but who withdrew it, when a larger sum of money was the reward!

Mr. Cooke inquired, if he meant him?

Mr. Campbell—I do.

Mr. Cooke said, that he had indeed once been in communion with an Arian Presbytery; and that connexion had left such deep wounds in his conscience, as nothing but the blood of Christ, and the Spirit of the Holy Ghost, could heal!

Mr. S. Dill approved of Mr. Campbell's candour, and inquired, whether Mr. Campbell was an Arian or Socinian?

Mr. F. Blakely hoped we should have neither a Popish nor Presbyterian Inquisition in this house.

On Wednesday the question was put, when there appeared for the Amendment, 91—Against it, 59—Majority, for Mr. Porter's continuance in office, 32.

ORTHODOX TEST.

Thursday, June 28. Mr. Cooke gave in a Protest, signed by 48 members, against Mr. Porter's appointment to be Clerk; which, after some discussion, was ordered, by a majority of 10, to be entered in the Minutes.

Mr. Cooke rose, and said, that the Synod had done great honour to itself by the vote it had just passed. As we would stand well in the eyes of the world, as ministers of the Lord Jesus, he conceived we were called on to put on record our opinions regarding certain great leading doctrines of our faith. With this view, he was prepared with a list of the members of this Synod, and was ready to affix a mark to each of those ministers' names, whom he believed to be Arian. This would afford Dr. Wright an opportunity of expressing those sentiments on this subject, to which he seemed so anxious to give utterance. An honest man (continued he) is said to be the noblest work of God; and it would be the act of honest men, for us to state to the world what is our belief, and to let our people know what our sentiments really are. If we rely for our salvation on Christ Jesus, it is surely worth our while to declare unto men that such is our belief; and that we cast ourselves wholly and solely on him for salvation—on him, who is the refuge of all that come unto him. It is surely worth while, that the Arians should tell to the world what their views are, on the great question of their own and their congregations' souls' eternal welfare. The proceedings of this body have found, and the transactions of this day will find, their way to the British metropolis, nay, over the whole British empire, and even into the Continent of Europe, and our colonies abroad; and they will be animadverted on with all the severity and want of candour for which certain publications are proverbial! After the avowals and the declarations we have heard made in this house, we cannot go home to our people, without leaving something on record, which will enable them to know who are the Arians, and who are not. He had heard men in that house say, that our souls' eternal salvation does not depend on the saving grace of the blood of the Lord Jesus. He conceived those persons, who differed from him on this subject, were in error; but they may not be so; and were he to stand alone in the measure he had now brought forth, he would put the issue of the question to the test. In the beginning, God said, "Let there be light, and there was light." Now, if we have the light in us, let us set it on the hill of our salvation,—let us set it on the hill of the pulpit,—let us set it on the hill of the public press,—and let it so shine before men, that our deeds may be seen and known! "If I could conceive that there was the slightest attempt to persecute for the sake of opinion, in the motion I have now made, I should be the last man who would put my hand to further such a measure. I have no right to institute any proceeding which might interfere with men's £100 or £150 a-year: it is not with that view that I have prepared the resolution I wish this meeting to sanction with their approval; but it is the blessed light of God which had opened my eyes to the danger, and which directs me to withdraw from those men whose views are not as my views; and whose hopes of salvation do not rest on the same rock as mine! Dr. Wright has expressed a wish, that I should point out who the thirty-five or forty Arians are, in this body. If he wishes for it, I am ready to go over the list of the Synod, and to put a mark opposite to those whom

I believe to be Arians. The blood of Jesus is so precious to all who wish to be saved through him, that none who sincerely believe in him, will deny him. Let us at once, then, lay hold of the truth, and openly, before men, say whether the Eternal Son of God be indeed the God of our salvation!" Mr. Cooke concluded by moving an Orthodox Test of Faith in the Trinity.

Mr. Porter said, that with regard to the Test which it is now proposed to impose on the members of this body, he would beg leave to remind the advocates of that measure, that attempts at uniformity of opinion in matters of faith, have been the cause of all the contentions, persecutions, and schisms, which have taken place in the Christian Church. Such attempts have invariably been abortive. They may, and must produce hyprocrisy; but they can never produce unanimity. So long as different men have different degrees of natural understanding; and so long as they are reared under the influence of different prejudices and prepossessions, there are certain subjects on which they will always disagree. If a doctrine be true, it will, under the providence of God, ultimately become prevalent. If it be not true, the most rigid test by which it can be enforced, will not prevent it from gradually coming to nought. As well might you attempt to arrest the progress of the in-coming tide, by opposing to it the puny dykes which children sometimes form of the sand on its shore, as attempt to stop the progress of truth (if truth is on our side), by any Synodical declaration or regulation which can possibly be devised. We have proofs in abundance, of the utter inefficiency of Synodical Acts, when opposed to the temper of the times. The Antrim separation was caused by a strict enforcement of subscription to the Westminster Confession; and, until very lately, we had upon our books line upon line, and law upon law, requiring unqualified subscription to that formula. What was the consequence? In the course of time, those laws ceased to be enforced, and subscription was very generally laid aside.

Calvinism is held, by different men, with different degrees of strictness. There are shades of difference in opinion amongst the gentlemen who are for imposing the present test. Would every one of them be willing to declare, at this moment, his belief in all the doctrines of the Westminster Confession? Some of them would not. Yet, on the very same principle, on which this test is supported, these men might be called on by their more rigid associates, either to declare their entire approbation of that formula, or subject themselves to the odium of the ignorant multitude, by declining to do so. Would they not think it hard, to be reduced to such an alternative? Let them do unto others as they would wish to be done by. As for himself, he had no personal interest in this matter. His sentiments were well known; and he could incur no additional reproach by declining the test proposed. On general principles, he declared himself hostile to all human tests in matters of faith. Presbyterians are in the habit of boasting that the Bible—and the Bible only, is their creed; and of maintaining the full sufficiency of the Scriptures, for bringing men to the knowledge of all needful truth. Then, where can be the necessity for any human exposition of faith? God never left his Word for man to mend. Mr. P. looked on all such tests as the present, not only as restraints on freedom of inquiry, and consequently injurious to the interests of truth, but as presumptuous encroachments on the authority of Christ, who is the sole legislator in his own church. For men to usurp his peculiar prerogative, is an act of spiritual rebellion. No doubt, every religious society has a right to inquire into the character and qualifications of those persons who wish to enter it, either as ordinary members, or as ministers. But in judging of these qualifications, the society, or church, must be altogether regulated by the rules laid down in the gospel. We ought always to keep in mind, that whatever be the case with other Churches, ours is not a civil society, governed

by the laws of man, but a religious body, which is, or at least ought to be, under the exclusive control of laws enacted by Christ. Neither the Presbyterian Church, therefore, nor any other church, has a right to act as if it were a civil society. We have no right to frame new regulations by general consent, and exclude such persons as will not submit to those arbitrary and innovating impositions. The laws of Christ, and his laws only, are the rules by which we are on all occasions to be directed. If we look into the Gospel, we shall find the test of admission into the Christian Church exceedingly simple. Every one who confesses that Christ has come in the flesh, is to be received. Belief in the Lord Jesus Christ was the profession of faith which was required of the Eunuch. We are told, that in every nation, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, will be accepted—that is, is worthy of being received into the Christian Church; for that is unquestionably its primary import.

Mr. Brown (of Tobermore) rose to propose an amendment to Mr. Cooke's motion, which he prefaced in an address of considerable length; in the course of which, he urged the impolicy of dividing the body, and thus distracting the best interests of Presbyterianism in Ireland. He went on to explain his views of the Christian religion, by stating his belief that the doctrines of his faith were contained in the writings of Calvin and Knox, and in the Westminster Confession of Faith; and expressed his belief that those doctrines formed the religion of this body. He regretted that Arianism had been exhibited amongst the members of Synod, and acknowledged that Mr. Cooke was an able champion of his party. He would gladly fight under Mr. Cooke's banners; but in this instance, the views of that gentleman were too narrow and contracted to enable him to do so. He was desirous that a measure should be now adopted, which would clear this body from the charge of Arianism; but he had several objections to Mr. Cooke's motion. It did not embrace grounds sufficiently extensive—it was not agreeable to the writings of Calvin—it had not come through the Committee of Overtures, where it would have received the necessary modifications—and it was not calculated to heal the wound made in this body, by the charge made against it of fostering Arian principles; but rather to increase and extend the disease. I tell you (said Mr. B.) a division of this body will strengthen the power of your enemies, and vitally injure the cause of Protestantism. He then moved an amendment, to the effect—that the doctrines of the Christian religion are contained in the writings of Calvin and Knox, and in the Westminster Confession of Faith; and that these are the doctrines of this body.

Dr. Wright seconded Mr. Brown's motion. He observed, that early in life he had joined the Bangor Presbytery, because he could not then conscientiously sign the Westminster Confession of Faith; since which period, he had changed his opinion on that subject.

Mr. Carlile expressed his astonishment at hearing any sensible man proposing such a measure, as that which had just been submitted to the house, by the two last speakers. Was Dr. Wright, or any one present, prepared to say, that he had read the whole works of Calvin and John Knox? Or, if they had, were they prepared to subscribe to those writings. For his part, he was not. He would not sign the resolution, as it now stood, if it passed: he had objections to the composition, the wording, grammar, &c. He objected particularly to the word "essence"—which, were he called on to explain, after signature, he could not do. It was a philosophical question, to inquire into that subject; and as it could not be found in Scripture, he would object to it. After expressing himself anxious for the body remaining united, and imploring the Synod not to press their brethren, without affording them time for consideration, he suggested several alterations in Mr. Cooke's motion.

Dr. Hanna said, that whilst he was a Calvinist, he wished to avoid

the terms which are used by Calvinists, in the various discussions which have occurred in the Church. He would suggest the omission of the words, "essence," "godhead," &c. and would supply their places with simpler and more scriptural language. If Mr. Cooke pressed his motion as it now stood, he would not sign it.

A debate now ensued, of considerable length, between the Orthodox ministers, relating to the terms which should be applied in denoting the persons of the Trinity. Mr. Stewart (Broughshane) said that any word in high Dutch or low Dutch, would to him be just as intelligible as the term "essence." Mr. Elder wished the word "Godhead" introduced; and differed greatly with Dr. Hanna's explanation of Scripture. One member wished the term to be "Father, Word, and Spirit"—another, "Father, Son, and Spirit"—another, "Father, Word, and Holy Ghost" —another, "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

Mr. Montgomery here rose, and observed, that surely it was but fair, that brethren of humbler capacity should be allowed some licence, in deciding on these nice points, when the Calvinistic Fathers themselves could not agree about the very epithets which should be applied to the Deity.

Mr. Campbell (Templepatrick) rose, and said,—Moderator, I have reflected with seriousness on the speech I made a few evenings ago. I have been writhing under the lashes I received; and no wonder, for they were laid on with a heavy hand. One Member, for whom I ever entertained a sincere friendship (Mr. M'Cullough), pronounced my sentiments on that occasion blasphemous,—and said, that when he heard them, he could have shed tears, and was disposed to take his hat and depart from the house. Another (Mr. M'Clelland of Ahoghill), pronounced them damnable. Mr. Cooke alleged, that they were the bark of personal righteousness, which would be overwhelmed in the ocean of misery; and Mr. Stewart, after expressing his esteem for me personally, declared that they were unsound and unscriptural. Sir, I have attended Synod for thirty-one meetings. To the meeting of Synod I always looked forward as a season of jubilee. It has proved widely different on the present occasion. Since the delivery of that speech, I have been shunned by all my Fathers and Brethren, as if there were something pestilential about me, and as if whosoever came within the halo, must have his mind infected.

But, Sir, in vindication of myself, I feel called on to make an exposition of my sentiments. I believe, Sir, in the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, as firmly as any man in this assembly. I believe in the Divinity of his Mission, his Works, his Office, and his Character. I believe in his pre-existent state. How can I do otherwise? He has said, "Father, I have glorified thee on earth, glorify me with that glory which I enjoyed with thee even before the world was." I embrace him as the great prophet of God, sent into the world to instruct men in things pertaining to salvation; who spake as never man spake, and who confirmed the divinity of his mission by the miracles he performed; for none could have done the works which he did, unless the Father were with him. I can embrace him as the High Priest of our Christian profession, who, having been delivered for our offences, rose again for our justification. I can embrace him as the King and Head of the Church, who rose from the dead, is now highly exalted, and set at the right hand of the Throne of God,—angels, authorities, principalities, and powers, being made subject unto him; and who will be with his servants always, even to the end of the world, to rule and defend them, and to conquer and restrain all his and our enemies; and who shall reign till he shall have subdued all things unto himself, and till sin, the last enemy, shall be destroyed. I embrace him as the Judge of the quick and the dead; the Apostle having said, that we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, —and he himself having taught us, that in the last day, the Son of Man shall sit upon the Throne of his glory, before whom shall be gathered all

nations for judgment; and that the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. I can embrace him as the Author and Finisher of our faith, unto whom we are to look as our Mediator and Intercessor, passed into the heavenly world before us, and who will come again, and take his followers unto himself.—I consider, as I said on a former occasion, the responsibility of man for his actions; and that, as without faith it is impossible to please God, so without holiness no man shall see the Lord. I believe that we ought to evidence our faith by our works; that, if we know these things, happy are we if we do them; and that, without a life conformable to his example, we can be none of his; agreeably to what he himself said,—"Then are ye my friends, when ye do whatsoever I have commanded you." I believe in those Scriptures which say, that for this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil—that God raised him up, and sent him to bless us, in turning away every one of us from our iniquities—and that he gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity, and to purify us to himself, a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Let not the thought, then, be entertained for a moment, that I am a Deist, or an Infidel, or a Denier of the Divinity of the Redeemer; but it is on the momentous subject of the SUPREME Deity of Christ, that I hesitate; and I candidly confess that I have not arrived at a satisfactory conclusion on this deep and inscrutable mystery; nor can I give my declaration in favour of it, unless I could be convinced of what a gentleman, who has lately published sermons, seems to consider an impossibility,—that the sender is the same as the sent, or that the Lord, in sending his Angel into the world, sent himself; and, therefore, let me not be denominated an Arian, while I demur, till I have better evidence, to subscribe myself a Trinitarian.

Mr. Cooke rose to defend himself from the charge of the want of candour. Ulterior measures have been spoken of, and dark hints thrown out, of consequences which may follow. He would now tell the members all the ulterior measures he had in contemplation, and thus, he hoped, enable those doubting and hesitating persons to make up their minds on the subject of the present motion. On an evening, since the assembling of the present Synod, he had met a number of his elder brethren, who stood, in his estimation, at the head of this body, in consultation on what course of proceedings should be adopted, in consequence of the reports that had gone abroad regarding the religious state of this Synod. But, in the course of their consultations, he did not altogether agree with his elder fathers. Therefore, he retired from them, and allowed them to pursue their own views. He found the general opinion with them was, that as Arianism in this body was dying a natural death, it should be allowed to dwindle and die away of its good will—that is, that it should be allowed to go off in a "galloping consumption." He could not agree with them; and therefore, he withdrew from them. He next tried whether he would be left alone in an assembly of his younger brethren; and he arranged to meet a few of these whom he expected to be of his own views: when they assembled, there were found three to one of his elder brethren: and they all agreed that their senior fathers were acting in a way most injurious to the interests of the body. "Perhaps my present candour" said Mr. Cooke, "will again be charged against me as a crime, for having entered into a religious cabal. But I fear not the reproach which may fall on me;—I feel I am only fulfilling the duty of an honest servant, and I rejoice to find myself, and the members of this body who have joined me in my present undertaking, so united and cordial in all our measures. We were perfectly agreed on the necessity for the adoption of the present motion. Well then; we engaged, so soon as the measure now before you be decided, to meet again, and to agree on what other measures shall be adopted." He hoped this would satisfy those persons

who had charged him with want of candour. With regard to ulterior measures, he would state them: one object was, to prove that he was right in stating that there was a large body of Arians in the Synod; and, next, to devise some means of saving the congregations placed under those Arians, from being contaminated by the baneful disease under which their clergymen laboured. In the course of this procedure, he would avail himself of much valuable matter contained in Mr. Carlile's sermon—who had told us, that wolves in sheep's clothing had crept into the fold of Christ. Is it not notorious, that ministers have been hoodwinking their flocks—men who have crept into this body in false colours? The laws and regulations of the Synod have not been sufficiently strict, to guard against young men getting into congregations, after three or four trial sermons, without any strict scrutiny, or pledge of their soundness in the faith. One of his ulterior measures was, to guard against this; and if any young man shall come among us with a mask on, to take it off him, and to let the world know and see what he really is. If, afterwards, congregations shall prefer Arianism, why, in God's name, let them have it: let them choose Arian preachers to be their shepherds —but let us not join in the work of hoodwinking the people. The present state of our body is aptly illustrated in the story of the combat between the Scotch Highlander and the Frenchman. The Highlander was armed with his claymore and target; the Frenchman with his long small sword. The contest was carried on for some time without injury to either party; the skilful thrusts of the Frenchman being always caught on the Highlander's target. At length, wearied with the bloodless struggle, the Frenchman drew off from his guard, and desired the Highlander to come out and fight him fairly: for he would no longer contend with a man who hid himself behind a wooden door. Now, let these men, who are shielding themselves from the knowledge of their congregations and the world, come from their hiding places, and let us ascertain their strength, and the power of their weapons. It is but seven years, since a minister of this body heard two elders swear that a certain clergyman was truly orthodox, whom he (Mr. Cooke) knew to be an Arian. When the people hear a fine dissertation on the mere morality of life, and a few neat and select passages introduced into a flowery sermon, they may be amused; but the true state of their soul's danger, and the truth as it is in the Lord Jesus, is left out; and they receive none of that spiritual food which can make man happy in life, and blessed in a glorious eternity. Another ulterior object was,—to have a committee of Synod appointed, who would send missionaries into certain extensive congregations, where the Gospel of Christ has not been preached for many years. The Committee's business would be, when they found a faithless minister neglecting to teach his people the truth as it is in the Lord Jesus,—to suspend that preacher,—to pray with him, and to exhort him to turn unto the truth. Also to pray with the people, to instruct them in those doctrines which have been left us by Christ, to bring unto himself a chosen people, zealous of good works; to entreat them to renew a right spirit within them, and to abandon their mistaken course. If the minister, in due time, exhibited a spirit of repentance, then he should be reinstated in his pulpit; but if he still remained contumacious, then he is to be lopped off like a diseased limb, lest through this member the whole body become infected. In defence of this means of renewing a right spirit within the Church of Christ, Mr. Cooke instanced the zeal which is exhibited in the efforts now making to evangelize Africa, India, and the South Sea Islands; and inquired whether the eternal happiness of the inhabitants of these distant regions was more dear to this body, than that of our brethren and kindred? It is the "unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," (said Mr. C.) amongst those followers of Christ who are thus engaged, that I wish to preserve; and not with men who

would join in a league to rob our Lord and Master of his Crown of Eternal Glory.—Another object was, to preclude the members of this body *from holding ministerial communion with the persons who thus differ with us on this most vital of all questions.* Mr. Cooke then instanced two ships setting off, one to the North and the other to the South Pole; and observed, that they might as well endeavour to hold communion on their respective voyages, as an Arian and a true believer in the Eternal Divinity of Christ, attempt to hold communion in the discharge of their duties. Another ulterior measure, was, not to attempt to split the Synod *this year*, but, with the blessing of God, he did contemplate that measure *next year*. He then made a powerful appeal to the Synod, not to stand idly by, whilst they saw, in this very house, their Lord and Master stripped of his eternal Godship, and robbed of his Everlasting Crown of Glory!

Mr. Mitchell rose, and expressed a wish, briefly to state his sentiments on the subject of these proceedings. The present motion embraced two objects: one was to vindicate this body from certain charges which had been made against it,—the other, to serve as a test of individual opinion. As far as that part goes, which relates to vindication, he will vote for it—if he votes at all; but as to the test, he would protest against it, as an attack on individual liberty of conscience. It may lead many a weak brother into temptation; and it might do serious injury to many of his Calvinistic brethren around him (who are resolved not to sign) should the list go forth to the world without their names. The passing of this measure is laying a foundation for hypocrisy; and, he declared before God, that he would rather see in this body ten ministers unsound in the faith, than one hypocrite. He would also venture to affirm, that it would fail as a Test; because he knew many Calvinistic members who would resist this forging of mental fetters. It was introducing an Inquisition into this body, which he never would submit to. He has been a member of Synod for twenty-two years; he was licensed by the Derry Presbytery, and no charge can be made against him for unsoundness in the faith; but he never will submit to be dragged into signing, as a Test of his belief in the doctrines of the Scriptures, any formulary of human construction.

Mr. Montgomery rose, and spoke to the following effect:—Moderator, in coming forward to address you on the present occasion, I cannot avoid feeling that I do so under many disadvantages. The man who has the multitude at his back, who sails upon the full tide of popular favour, has an easy task to perform in vindicating his opinions; for there is a sympathy in the breasts of his auditors, which gives energy and life to all that he utters. But, the individual who ventures to stem the current of public feeling, who goes forth in his frail bark against the rolling waters, has only a cheerless and a hopeless prospect before him. Such is my situation at present; yet although I may be driven back by the stream, or overwhelmed by the tempest, I cannot see the Synod of Ulster rushing forward, in the dangerous confidence of security, to what I consider destruction, without boldly pushing forth to warn her of the shoals and quicksands to which she is approaching.

A Presbyterian, by education, and feeling, and conviction—a Presbyterian, because I consider the principles of our Church essentially favourable to the great cause of Civil and Religious Liberty—I should be unworthy of the privileges which I enjoy, if any contemptible view of personal convenience, or temporal interest, could prevent me from expressing freely, what I strongly feel. I wish, however, to approach this important subject in a serious frame of mind, and in as calm a manner, as the agitations of the last four days will permit. But, as I am sensible that the ardour of debate, and the very nature of an extemporaneous address, may carry me beyond those mild and decorous bounds, which

the character and station of this assembly require to be observed, I commit myself to the judicious correction of the Moderator. I feel it the more necessary to do so, as I, and those who think with me, have had our opinions treated, by several speakers, with terms of unmeasured obloquy and reproach. The gentlest epithet applied to us, has been that of *Heretics*. I never expected to hear the word used in a *Protestant* assembly; but its reiterated application on the present occasion, has taught me, that no mode of faith can change the evil propensities of human nature, and that the hateful passions of men are never so malignant as when they put on the sacred garb of religion. Those, however, who have adopted this vulgar system of abuse, which only reflects discredit upon themselves, and the cause which they espouse, have not the merit of originality in the course which they pursue. The attaching of odious *names* to opinions and persons, marked out for persecution, has always been the favourite plan of the exclusively righteous. I feel unwilling even to allude, in this heated assembly, to the most glorious Being that ever appeared upon earth; but we all know that the Redeemer of the world was brought to the cross, under the accusation of *blasphemy*—and the great Apostle of the Gentiles was reviled as a *Heretic*, for preaching the truth dictated to him by the Holy Spirit. Paul "confessed that after the manner which they called heresy, worshipped he the Lord God of his fathers." I cheerfully make the same admission: I own, that after the manner which the majority here "call heresy," I do worship my Creator. But I am not the more in *real* error on that account; for I believe no member of this Synod will say, that *numbers* prove "sound doctrine." If such a position were tenable, woe be unto Protestantism! Indeed, Moderator, except for the credit of this body, I care not by what name I may be called: neither shall I retort upon my opponents the invidious epithets which might easily be applied, being determined not to sacrifice the best part of Christianity, its spirit of infinite benignity and love, to the support of a party, or the maintenance of speculative opinions.

Mr. Cooke has been courteous enough to compliment me, as possessing "talents, acquirements, and eloquence of no ordinary kind;" and to say, that *he* thinks more highly of *my* abilities, than I do of *his*." For the first part of his eulogium, however unmerited, I feel grateful; though probably I ought to consider it only as the *tact* of an ambitious general, magnifying the power of his enemy, merely to enhance the glory of certain victory. With regard to our comparative estimate of each other's talents, I hope he is correct; for, knowing how highly I appreciate *his* abilities, I should be proud to stand even *higher* in the estimation of so competent a judge. But admitting his compliment to be sincere, in how awkward a situation does it place himself, in condemning my opinions! He grants me a mind *capable* of judging, and concedes that I possess literary acquirements adequate to enlighten and direct my judgment; and yet (most strange to say!) he declares that I do not understand the fundamental doctrine of the Gospel, which he avers is clearly revealed in every page of the New Testament! How this alleged force of intellect, and extent of information, can be reconciled with my alleged ignorance of the plainest proposition of Revelation, it is not for me to determine: but as I feel grateful for his courtesy, I freely give him the full benefit of his argument.

I am not, however, more surprised at Mr. Cooke's granting to me all the attributes which are usually considered necessary to enable a man to form correct opinions, and then declaring that I am in dangerous error, than I am at the humble estimate which he seems to make of his own talents, whilst he proposes to guide the opinions of others, by a religious Test or Declaration. How a church that considered itself *infallible*, or an individual who believed himself *inspired*, could make such a proposition, I can readily conceive: but, how any man, or body of men, admitting fallibility of judgment, and laying no claim to inspiration, can be

guilty of such an audacious attempt "to lord it over God's heritage," (the conscience,) I do confess, I have no faculties to comprehend. As there is a *possibility* of error, wherever there is human *fallibility*, in how awful a situation must those stand, who either require or give assent, to that which *may* be "the commandment of men," instead of "the truth of God!" It is vain to tell me, that "this is only a declaration of opinion, not a test of belief." It is a distinction without a difference: for, what a man *declares*, at the bidding of his fellow-man, he virtually *subscribes*. Now, I do say, without fear of rational or scriptural contradiction, that any body of fallible men, who demand assent or subscription, to any declaration or test of faith, in *human language*, under the fear of any penalty, or the hope of any reward, are trenching, not merely upon the fundamental principle of Protestantism, "the right of private judgment," but also upon the sacred prerogative of the great Head of the Church. "Who art thou," saith the Apostle, "that judgest another man's servant? To his own master, let him stand or fall." And elsewhere we are instructed, that "one is our master, even Christ, and all we are brethren." How dare those very Presbyterians, that declaim most loudly against the usurpations of Popery, who call upon the Catholics to read their Bibles, to despise their Priests, and to extricate themselves from the trammels of their church—how dare they, in the face of common shame, and common consistency, to turn upon their brethren, and to attempt to place "the yoke of bondage" upon their necks! When I witness such an attempt, I blush for the weakness or the wickedness of man; but I will neither be a partaker in the shame, nor in the crime. So truly do I detest all human interference in matters of conscience, and so awful have been its effects in the world, that were you this moment to lay before me a human creed, every word of which I believed, I would not subscribe it, lest I should thereby sanction the interference of man, with the sole prerogative of the Redeemer. Indeed, what are all such attempts, but a manifestation of the impious vanity of man, pretending "to be wise above what is written," and to reveal the will of God *more clearly* than it has been revealed by the spirit of truth. Sir, I will subscribe no creed but the Bible; I will account for my views of it to no human tribunal but my congregation; and when this world, and its evil passions shall have passed away, I pray to Him "who alone can keep me from falling," that I may not be altogether unprepared to answer for my faith, to the great Head of the Church.

I admit that this body has the *power* to pass any declaration which it pleases, and to demand any submission of its members which it pleases; but I deny that it has any Scripture warrant for doing so. And if, Moderator, you should persevere, what will be the consequence? You may make *hypocrites* of the weak, and the crafty, and the worldly; you may make *martyrs* of the firm, the upright, and the sincere: but every child who hears me, must know, that you cannot change the conviction of a single mind, or alter the feeling of a single heart. Suppose you pass your declaration, and I refuse my assent or signature, which as an honest man I must refuse, you will probably say unto me, "we can no longer give you the right hand of fellowship:" but, if I *subscribe* your creed, though you *know* I do not *believe* it, then you will receive me as a brother in the Lord! How revolting then, is this project, to every virtuous feeling of the human heart? You will spurn the hand which is pure as the mountain snow, whilst you clasp, with the grasp of friendship, that which is black with the stains of perjury! Woe be unto the Presbyterian Church, if ever that day shall come, in which falsehood and dissimulation shall be bonds of union, whilst truth and sincerity shall be cast out of her councils!

[We are sorry to be obliged to break off in the midst of Mr. Montgomery's admirable speech, but we shall gladly give the remainder next Number. The talent, eloquence, Christian feeling, and, we take it, Christian principle, were on one side; *the vote was on the other.*]

Strabane, July 5, 1827.

To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.

Sir,—The General Synod of Ulster closed its annual sittings yesterday, being the ninth day since the opening of the meeting. The friends of free inquiry lamenting, as they do, every thing like intolerance, must yet rejoice at the proceedings and statements of many members of that Reverend Body. A few of the Old-light party showed indeed more of the spirit of Calvin than of Christ, and have thereby wounded the feelings of many of their orthodox, but more humble and liberal brethren. They have, at least, roused the attention and zeal of lukewarm Arians.

The inhabitants of this town and neighbourhood had heard little of the Christian Moderator, and nothing, so far as I know, of the Christian Pioneer, before the meeting of Synod; but they had no sooner heard them publicly denounced by one of the ministers, than different individuals resolved to have a reading of these periodicals. It is well ascertained, that the principal opponent and some of his supporters have never perused the works in question; but they have, no doubt, been guided, agreeably to their usual strain, *by the Spirit of God*, in discerning the contents of these unread publications. The Editor need not be offended at the language which was applied to the types, paper, and press of the Pioneer, for the Arians were called, when face to face, "high-way robbers—low-way robbers—wolves in sheep's clothing—Mahometans—infidels—atheists"—and various other names, not almost, but altogether, in the style of Billingsgate. A Mr. Blakely from the County Down, ventured to remind his brethren who had used the harsh expressions, that Arians and Socinians, as they were called, had been the noblest and most successful defenders of Christianity, and the best ornaments of literature; and that, if the writings of Locke, Lardner, Milton, Newton, Abernethy, Emlyn, and other celebrated individuals were lost, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to supply the deficiency. But such was the fanaticism of the moment, that he would not be heard at any length, and was reminded that his observations were foreign to the business before the House. Mr. Montgomery of Belfast, Mr. Alexander of Crumlin, and Mr. Campbell of Templepatrick, often shared the same fate, when they attempted to explain or defend on doctrinal points. The members opposed to them, carried away by the popular feeling, may not have been conscious of this injustice, but it was quite evident to disinterested spectators. It is, however, but a just tribute to different ministers, distinguished by the name of Old-light, to record that they frequently remonstrated with their orthodox brethren on their language and proceedings, and declared that they were kindling and scattering the very sparks which they were anxious to extinguish. Dr. Wright, Mr. Carlile, and Dr. Hanna pursued this train of reasoning, spoke of Arianism dying a natural death, and besought their Calvinistic brethren to let it alone.

I am sorry to confess that the inhabitants of this town, rated at 6,000, have paid little attention to theological subjects; but

some of them who are not friendly to Arianism, have been constrained to declare, since the meeting of Synod, that the avowed and reputed Arians conducted themselves with such temper and ability, as have brought them to a determination to examine carefully into their principles. This is bringing good out of seeming evil, and proves that men will not be frightened into the dogmas of Synods and Councils, but will obey their Saviour, and judge for themselves that which is right.

To many, *numbers* possess a wonderful charm—forgetting, as they must, that every improvement in art and science, every reformation in religion and morals, has been brought about by a few honest and manly individuals, in opposition to the will and wishes of the multitude,—forgetting, likewise, that, if *numbers* be made the test of truth, and *evidence* be forgotten or neglected, every thing that is dear to the Protestant, the Dissenter, nay, to the Christian, must be given up. The long night of Popery would again return, or the midnight darkness of Paganism cover the land.

On reading the above observations to a confidential friend, he smiled, and said, "'Arianism dying a natural death!' Good!" And to the condemnation of my ignorance, informed me, that there were between two and three hundred Unitarian Congregations in England, composed of devout, reading, and zealous members, from the humblest to the highest ranks; that there were a great number in America; a few in Scotland and elsewhere; and added, that they were increasing every year. So that, the orthodox themselves being judges, their favourite test of numbers, may ere long, turn the scale against themselves.

The proceedings of the Synod, when shaping their test or declaration regarding the Trinity, were so confused, and they found it so extremely difficult to discover language with which the Calvinists could agree to express their faith in that doctrine, that I have been since much puzzled in reflecting on the terms and phrases. The terms Essence, Person, and Substance were objected to, by some of the most experienced divines, as too scholastic. The phrases, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost—the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and some similar ones, were considered as not sufficiently definite. Two or three members, who discovered that the discussion was doing harm, suggested, as a remedy, that they could declare their belief in the *doctrine* of the Trinity, without being so particular about *words!* After various attempts at some safe and guarded language, they were driven by a kind of necessity to adopt the old and, even to common and unthinking readers, the evidently unscriptural phraseology of the Westminster Shorter Catechism—"There are three Persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one God, the same in Substance, equal in Power and Glory."

Whether the Synod means by the word Person, a whole Being or only a part of a Being, a finite or an infinite Person, a distinct God or only a part of God, was not decided. For my own part, I am extremely anxious to have an explanation of the term; and must confess that it is more than strange, that a doctrine which

is said to be so fundamental and important, has not been clearly recorded in plain language in the Bible. If the *fact* were registered in the Scriptures, that the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost are one God, it would satisfy many doubters, who would not be so presumptuous as to demand any thing about the *mode* or the *manner*. Mr. Stuart, Professor of Theology for the Seceders at Andover, America, has, as I am told, condemned the use of the term Person, in defending the doctrine of the Trinity. His words, I learn, are, "I could heartily wish, indeed, that the word *Person* never had come into the Symbols of the Churches, because it has been the occasion of so much unnecessary dispute and difficulty." Next year, it is to be hoped, the Synod will explain what they mean by the term *Person*, that they may not be the means of leading those who pin their faith on their sleeves, into the belief of three Gods.

I cannot close these desultory remarks, without observing, that the Rev. Mr. Alexander, a man of high moral and literary attainments, charged Mr. Cooke, in open Synod, with having *deserted the Table of the Lord Jesus Christ, to bow his knee to an earthly King*. Had his gracious Sovereign known, when Mr. C. was in his presence, that he had thus forsaken Christ for George, his Majesty must surely have been shocked. Had an Arian so turned his back upon the Captain of his Salvation, all Ulster would have been in arms against the "high-way robber," the ungrateful and blasphemous deserter.

AN ULSTER PRESBYTERIAN.

To the Rev. Robert Stewart, A. M. Minister of the Gospel at Broughshane, Ireland.

SIR,—Your discourse on the "Essential Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ," has disappointed your admirers. In times of popular ferment, men of very moderate acquirements have been known, by a judicious accommodation to the prejudices of the multitude, to raise themselves to an unlooked-for eminence. Their unexpected success, whilst it astonishes others, often dazzles and misleads themselves. In this novel situation, for which their talents are not calculated, they are urged by vanity to aspire after loftier praise; and failing in the idle attempt, become objects of pity to their friends, and of scorn to their enemies. A considerable fluency of expression—a countenance not easily discomposed—a power of talking to an unmeasurable length, with few ideas, and in very common language—and above all, a happy compliance with popular prepossessions, had obtained for you some reputation as a preacher, among the honest but unenlightened people, of whom you are the spiritual guide. In that obscure station, you might still have continued to have been regarded as a man of unbounded knowledge; and a few of the neighbouring congregations might have united their plaudits with those of your own charge, and have esteemed you one of the ablest champions of the orthodox faith.

In an evil hour, listening to the flattering recommendation of ill-judging friends, and above all, to the advice of Lord Mount-

cashel, you have ventured to come before the public as a writer. There is, perhaps, no more hackneyed apology for the vanity of unfledged authorship, than that of the solicitation of friends; and it had been good for you, if a natural confidence in your own powers, had not received this injudicious excitement. It has precipitated you into a measure for which you were altogether unfit, and completely dissipated the illusion from the public mind. Even those who were opposed to you in opinion, were inclined to have given you credit for considerable talent; and expected, that, although your arguments might not have been convincing, they would have been at least placed in the strongest light. Above all, from an impression, I pretend not to say how it originated, that, when at college, you had been the associate of young men of liberal sentiments in religion, with whose opinions your own had corresponded, it was hoped, that, in you the violence of controversy would have been abated, by the difficulties which you must have experienced, in framing a religious creed; and that they who had the misfortune to differ from you, on such deep and mysterious questions, would have been treated according to the courtesies of civilized life, and the professed moderation of those assuming the Christian name. Their expectations have not been realized. I therefore now address myself to you in the bitterness of disappointment, and more in sorrow than in anger.

With your discourse on "Papal Supremacy," I do not feel myself immediately concerned; and shall therefore leave you to settle that controversy as you best may, with the Rev. Father Macaulay, with this single remark, that the creed which you have now adopted, as it is indefensible on the ground of common sense, ties up the hands of a protestant advocate, and suggests the advantage of the authoritative decisions of an infallible church.

In the preface to your discourse, you say, that the author "was at one time in considerable doubt respecting the divinity of our Lord. The metaphysical disquisitions of Dr. Samuel Clarke, entitled, 'the Scripture doctrine of the Trinity,' had very nearly misled him. A little more and closer examination of the subject, however, enabled him to see, that the doctrine he was embracing, was not received on the authority of the Scriptures, but of Dr. Clarke; for he never should have found it in the Scriptures, had he not read Dr. Clarke's book." I by no means intend to call in question the sincerity of those convictions, which induced you to return to the faith of your forefathers. The minds of men are so differently constituted, that the arguments which operate irresistibly upon one, will fail in their effect when applied to another. But is it not possible, that the strong and deeply-rooted prepossessions of earlier years,—the reluctance which all must feel to give pain to those with whom they have long maintained affectionate intercourse, and to incur the overpowering weight of popular odium,—in a word, an anxiety to be persuaded of the truth of doctrines which it is equally your *wish* and your *interest* to believe, may not, unconsciously, have influenced your decisions, and have finally adjusted the wavering balance?

Permit me also to inquire, What were the views of the Trinity which you taught from the pulpit, during the time when you were "in considerable doubt respecting the divinity of our Lord;" when your understanding was in a state of abeyance as to this momentous doctrine? You do not inform us, when the cloud began to gather over your mind; nor what was the period of greatest obscuration; but merely, that toward the commencement of the year 1825, the darkness had passed away. Are we, then, to understand, that from the time of your appointment as a preacher, till the ominous 1825, a period of sixteen years, you "had not turned your attention directly to an inquiry into what really is the Scripture doctrine of the nature and character of our Lord Jesus Christ?"—that on a subject of such vast importance, you had not seriously inquired?—and that, although you had solemnly vowed to teach "the whole counsel of God," you had remained in gross and wilful ignorance of what he has revealed, respecting his nature and his attributes? You profess to believe, that the doctrine of the Trinity is essential to Christianity; and that the Arian, who questions it, is separated from the Deist and Atheist "by a partition-wall slight as the web of the gossamer." I repeat then the question, What was the doctrine, on this fundamental point, that you taught during the times of your spiritual darkness? Did you then, as now, lead your people to understand, that you were a firm believer in this mysterious dogma; though you had not seriously thought of it, and even entertained doubts respecting its truth? I leave you to answer these queries, and to explain these seeming inconsistencies, to the world, to your own conscience, and to your God.

In the introductory part of your discourse, in attempting to ascertain the nature of our blessed Lord, you say, that "the question must be answered by Scripture information alone. All attempts to answer it by information derived from other quarters, will be as unsuccessful as presumptuous. The Scripture informs us, that he is the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and God manifested in the flesh: but how this can, or cannot be, we are unable by reason or philosophy to explain." And again, after enumerating various things in nature, which we cannot fully understand, and yet of the existence of which, we do not entertain a doubt, you observe, "Why therefore will we not admit on the authority of the divine word, that there is but one God, incomprehensible in all conceivable perfections, and that he exists, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, although we cannot comprehend, or explain the nature of his existence?"

On this passage I would remark, that you assume the very point at issue, and take for granted what remains to be proved, that the doctrine of the Trinity is contained in Scripture. On the contrary, it is my firm and conscientious belief, that the Scriptures fairly interpreted, teach no such doctrine; but in numberless passages, inculcate the great and fundamental truth, that "there is but one God, and none other but he."

From the passage which I have quoted, as well as from the

general tenor of your discourse, you seem to deprecate the use of reason in matters of religion. It has long been a favourite measure with the supporters of dark and mysterious doctrines, to undervalue those powers which God has bestowed on his intelligent creatures, and to represent them as unfriendly to that divine revelation by which we have been happily enlightened. The design of this is very apparent. The love of power is one of the most deeply rooted passions of the human heart; and if the mass of the people can once be prevailed on to surrender their understandings to their spiritual guides, and to consider the doctrines of the Gospel, as utterly beyond their comprehension; then are they fully prepared to bow to ecclesiastical domination. A very slight acquaintance with the world, or even a knowledge of the recent proceedings of the General Synod of Ulster, at Strabane, may serve to convince us, that the Church of Rome is not the only church that has attempted to keep the human mind in trammels, and "to lord it over God's heritage."

But how, I would ask you, are we to know, whether that which professes to be a revelation of God, be from Heaven, or of men, except by the due exercise of that reason which places us so high in the scale of animated nature? And when we are fully persuaded that it has clear and undoubted evidence of having proceeded from the Father of lights, the purest and the best of beings, how are we to ascertain its meaning, but by calling to our aid those powers which our merciful Creator has bestowed on his intelligent creatures? Various Christian sects have arisen throughout the land, all professing to believe that the Bible is the word of God, and that their peculiar opinions are contained in it. Now, amidst this amazing discordance of sentiment, how are we to choose for ourselves, unless we search into, and inquire what is really taught in Holy Scripture, that we may frame our lives thereby? We know also, that if we take single, detached portions of Scripture, in the manner in which you have done, without regard to the connection in which they stand, or the point which the sacred writer wished to enforce, there are few opinions, however visionary or absurd, that may not thus be countenanced and supported by the Divine Word.

In endeavouring to ascertain the meaning of Scripture, if there be two modes of expression applied to the same subject, that are directly opposed to each other, then we should conclude, that one of them is literal, and the other figurative; and we ought to interpret them in that mode which is most agreeable to common sense, and the general tenor of Scripture. But you, Sir, have followed a very different course.

Though your sermon professes to be an illustration of the essential divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, I have found some difficulty in ascertaining the precise views which you entertain on this mysterious subject. In one place, indeed, you affirm, that "there is but one object of worship, the Trinity in unity, or the Deity revealed, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." Yet still, in these times of mental reservation, and theological quibbling,

some, who value themselves on their discernment, have, notwithstanding such a goodly appearance of orthodoxy, ventured to insinuate, that such language may be used, consistently with very heterodox opinions; and that from your evident reluctance to favour the public with your views of this doctrine, in your own language, that you had still, even after such a recent conversion, some misgivings of mind on the question; and that you leaned to the Sabellian heresy. As this, however, is but Unitarianism, under a different name, and would necessarily infer great disingenuousness on your part, I must dismiss all such conjectures, as fanciful and unkind.

The difficulties which I have felt in attempting to ascertain your real opinions from your discourse, are now entirely removed by a reference to that test of orthodoxy, imposed upon so many reluctant consciences, at the Presbyterian Inquisition at Strabane; and which you found no difficulty in swallowing, along with numbers whose soundness in the faith had previously been a matter of doubtful disputation. It is in these words: "I believe that there are three Persons in the Godhead, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in Substance, equal in Power, and Glory." Notwithstanding such high authority, I cannot avoid thinking that these words involve a contradiction; and require an effort of faith to receive, of which I acknowledge myself incapable. I admit that there are many subjects of a nature so sublime or mysterious, as to baffle the utmost efforts of the human mind. And the more truly we know ourselves and the various objects that surround us—the more we consider the relation in which we stand to the Great Author of all things—the more shall we be convinced of our ignorance, and the limited nature of our powers. That the Supreme, Almighty Being is to us incomprehensible, and that when we endeavour to conceive of him and his perfections, the mind is overpowered in the vain attempt, must have been felt by every one who has tried to form adequate conceptions on the subject. But when we are required to yield our assent to positions not merely dark and full of mystery, but *self-contradictory*, a degree of implicit faith is demanded from us, which we are not prepared to render. That we are very ignorant of the properties of matter and of spirit, cannot be disputed; but as, according to the usual meaning of words, *one person* signifies a being endued with *one intelligent mind*—to require us to believe that the Almighty is made up of *three separate independent persons*, each of which is possessed of *three intelligent minds;* and that yet these three are but *one person*, confounds all our ideas, and makes human language utterly unintelligible. If this doctrine does not imply a direct and manifest contradiction, I am at a loss to know what a contradiction is. The Trinitarian, to use the powerful language of an eminent writer, "believes three to be one, and one to be three; a Father not to be older than his Son: a Son to be equal with his Father; and one proceeding from both, to be equal to both! He believes three persons in one nature, and two natures in one person! He believes a Virgin to be the mother of a Son,

and that very Son of hers to be her Maker! He believes Him to have been shut up in a narrow cell, whom Heaven and earth could not contain! He believes Him to have been born in time, who was, and is from everlasting! He believes Him to have been a weak child, and carried in arms, who is Almighty; and Him once to have died, who alone has life and immortality!"

If you can believe all this, you have less sense than I could have supposed; and if you do not, you have less honesty than I could have wished. I leave you to a choice of difficulties, and, in the hope of addressing you again on these important matters, subscribe myself,

Yours faithfully,

July 16, 1827. VINDEX.

THE Anniversary of the Kent and Sussex Unitarian Association, was held, July 4, 1827, in the General Baptist Chapel, Blackfriars, Canterbury, where a numerous and respectable congregation assembled, to profit by the services of the Rev. R. Aspland of Hackney. The preacher, in a clear and impressive manner, applied the words, 1 Cor. iv. 13. "Being defamed, we entreat;" to the circumstances in which Unitarians are placed by the uncharitableness, or ignorance, of their opponents. He traced the sources of a censorious spirit to deprive defamation of all excuse, declared in what doctrines Unitarians are agreed, and in what they differ among themselves; and with great happiness of illustration, enforced the duty and propriety of attending to the Apostle's example. If deep attention be a true criterion of sympathy with the sentiments of a preacher, those who listened to the discourse must have been persuaded, that to suffer reproach is more accordant to the genius of Christianity, than to return reviling; and to advocate the truth with charity and gentleness, far better than to defend it by bitterness and evil speaking.

After the business of the Association had been transacted, its friends and supporters adjourned to the Assembly Rooms of the King's Head Hotel. John Brent, Esq. was called to the chair; and the company, of about 100 persons of both sexes, gladly manifested their thankfulness for the ability with which he filled the office. Various sentiments connected with civil and religious liberty, the particular business of the Association, and the general interests of mankind, emanated from the Chairman; and from the gentlemen who addressed the meeting received appropriate illustrations, accompanied by an earnest recommendation of the cause of truth and rational freedom, to the hearts and affections of all present.

It is pleasant to enter the house of God in company with men, the articles of whose faith are love for truth, and zeal for righteousness; in the communion of thought to which such principles give origin, the heart feels that the bonds of its confederacy are pure and mighty; it is roused from the indifference which uninterrupted fellowship with worldly maxims creates; animated to the

good-will which contemplates peace and blessing to the wretched of every degree; and excited to that nobleness of feeling which regards no glory so worthy the soul's best energies, as the glory of emancipating the human mind.

Such results have followed the social meetings of Christian people; and confidently do we rely, that they will ever be the results of those Associations in which men unite, not for the advancement of Sectarianism, but for the progress of knowledge, virtue, and truth. H. G.

On the 4th and 5th of July, the Fifteenth Anniversary of the Eastern Unitarian Association, was held at Halesworth, in Suffolk. In the regular course, the meeting should have been held at Yarmouth; but as a new chapel for Unitarian worship was to be opened at Halesworth, it was thought desirable to commence the services with the annual meeting of the Eastern Unitarian Association. Unitarianism at Halesworth is of recent origin: having its rise in the indefatigable labours of Mr. Thomas Lathom, an earnest and faithful advocate of free inquiry, through whose exertions many have been led to embrace its truths.

On the Wednesday evening, the Rev. H. R. Bowles of Yarmouth conducted the devotions. And the Rev. James Martineau of York College, preached from John iv. 35, 36. Mr. M. showed, that the minds of men were, in general, ripe for the reception of gospel truth; that it was the duty of all to endeavour to promulgate the sentiments of pure and undefiled Christianity, over the whole world; and, speaking of Unitarianism, he said, "Ours is the bow of promise in the moral firmament, which informs the world that it shall no more be deluged with sin, or enveloped in the black night of superstition." He warmly reprobated indifference; urged, that the fields were already white for harvest, and the wages of the labourers would be great and everlasting.

On Thursday morning, the Rev. Samuel Say Toms (52 years minister at Framlingham, Suffolk) opened the service. The Rev. E. Tagart of Norwich, also prayed; and the Rev. Michael Maurice of Southampton, preached a sermon, most admirably adapted to the occasion, from Acts ii. 42,—showing that the observation was applicable to the Unitarians, inasmuch, as they had continued steadfast in the doctrines of the Apostles, amidst the general apostacy to idolatry and polytheism. In an energetic and impressive manner, Mr. M. urged Unitarians to fight the good fight—to go on in the cause of true piety—and to continue in breaking of bread, and in prayer. After service, the business of the Society was transacted; when very satisfactory reports were made, by Mr. Henry Martineau and Mr. Tagart, the Treasurer and Secretary. Thanks were given to Messrs. James Martineau and Michael Maurice, for their excellent services; the latter of whom was requested to allow his sermon to be printed, at the expense of the Fund, with which request it is expected Mr. Maurice will comply. In the afternoon, 42 persons sat down to a plain dinner, at the Swan

Inn; the Rev. Mr. Maurice in the chair. The evening was delightful, and the utmost harmony and affectionate brotherly feeling prevailed. The meeting will be held next year at Yarmouth.

H. M. B.

On Friday the 6th of July, a Public Service was held at the Chapel, Earl-Street, Maidstone, on the occasion of the Rev. B. Mardon, M. A. (formerly of Glasgow) having accepted the pastoral charge of the Unitarian Congregation, statedly assembling in that place, and which became vacant by the resignation of the Rev. G. Kenrick, who resigned in consequence of ill health. After the service had been introduced by singing, reading, and prayer, Mr. Robert Cooper, on behalf of the Society, delivered an excellent address to the newly appointed Pastor, upon the great and important duties of the office he had accepted, and upon the manner in which the people had a right to expect a faithful and diligent Minister would discharge them. The address was delivered in the spirit of true Christian friendship and affection, and particularly distinguished by a tone of manly frankness and candour. Mr. Mardon's answer was highly interesting. It contained strong professions of ardent attachment to the cause of his Lord and Master, and of his determination to devote himself, with increased and increasing zeal, to its defence and promotion. He gloried in holding the distinguished office of a Christian Minister; and made a strong appeal to his attentive auditory, upon the uncharitableness of those of his brethren who denied him the appellation, merely on the ground of his not advocating some of the doctrines of reputed orthodoxy. After paying an eloquent and impressive tribute to the beauty and excellence of Christian charity, he declared his determination to cultivate and exemplify it, in his own life and preaching, to the utmost of his power and ability.

The Rev. L. Holden, (the venerable and deservedly esteemed Pastor of the Tenterden Congregation,) then delivered an admirable charge, full of friendly wishes and advice to both Minister and people; after which the Rev. R. Aspland of Hackney, preached an able, perspicuous, and argumentative discourse, from Ephesians iv. 1—6, containing a masterly defence of Unitarian Christianity, and showing that reputed orthodoxy was the real heresy, by having added to the doctrines contained in the New Testament. The preacher dwelt with great force and felicity of expression upon the last clause of the text.

In the afternoon, a large party of the Congregation and Friends, sat down to a dinner at the Mitre Tavern, Mr. Mardon in the chair. The Chairman gave several sentiments, prefaced with many excellent observations, connected with the business of the day; and the company were severally addressed by the Reverends Messrs. Holden, Aspland, Thomas, Green, and Esdaile, also by Messrs. Cooper, T. Pine, Allchin, J. Green, and Ellis. A settlement service conducted in the manner this was, may surely be said to

be free from all taint of superstition and priestly domination, and calculated to make no impressions but such as are highly favourable to the growth of that harmony and good fellowship, which should ever exist between the minister of religion, and the people committed to his charge.

We cannot close our First Volume more happily and appropriately, than with the following letter. We earnestly hope that its author may continue with diligence his Bible searchings, and that he may long experience that happiness which the possession and practical observance of Truth never fails to impart.

To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.

Sir,—The instance of the triumph of truth, over the prejudices of education, and the influences of family connexion and friendship, which I have to relate, will, I hope, be acceptable to you and your readers. I was born of Episcopalian parents; I was brought up under Congregational auspices; my religious principles were imbibed from the Assembly's Catechism; and I have been, till within the last few months, one of the boldest maintainers of the doctrines of Calvin. The minister I have always sat under, from my earliest recollection, has been a respectable and respected Independent; he has been my most intimate friend; his eye has been over all my paths, moral and literary. By him, in fact, I was first led to observe the beauties of literature; and by him I was watched over and nourished as the object of his fondest hopes. The Assembly's Catechism I committed to memory at the Sabbath-school, under his direction. I have long been a teacher there—a firm believer in the proper deity of the Son of God, and a bitter detester of all that bore the name of Socinianism, justly or unjustly. Early in life I had been horror-stricken by the perusal of Macgowan's Monitor, and from that period had formed a determination, which I have till lately kept inviolate, to adhere most tenaciously to the Trinitarian creed.

About three months ago, a highly valued friend, who is of the Unitarian persuasion, put into my hands some numbers of the Christian Pioneer, to which I promised to give a candid reading. I did so, and endeavoured to answer its reasonings on the limited duration of future punishment, and against the deity of Christ. I thought I had done this effectually, but only provoked further discussion. By degrees I began to find that the Trinitarian doctrine stood upon a sandy foundation, and could not be supported by reason or Scripture. The chief point at which I made a stand, was the doctrine of vicarious satisfaction—that I gave up last. How (said I) can a sinner be saved, if the Unitarian system be true? What Saviour does it provide him? Is it absolutely necessary to give up the redeeming blood of the Lamb—the efficacious death of the Cross? Supposing Christ to have been, as the Apostle Peter declares, "a man, approved of God," could he not

as well, by the appointment of the Almighty, have reconciled the creature to the Creator, as Moses by the appointment of the same Being, could make a dry passage for Israel through the Red Sea, or the Brazen Serpent heal the bitten Israelites? Nicholson's Encyclopedia, under the head Unitarians, satisfied me even on this subject. I read it again and again; and at the same time commenced a careful re-perusal of the Scriptures.

I strove as much as I could against the Unitarian system—endeavoured to convert my opponent—and first read to overthrow the Divine Unity, having constant recourse to the Scriptures at the same time with the Pioneer and Nicholson's work. I examined every text there referred to, till at length, as far as I have yet studied the subject, my pre-conceived opinions have bowed before the truth of Unitarianism. If I should ever find myself at fault, I shall request you, Mr. Editor, to set me right. I purpose, further, should this communication be acceptable, to write to you again, to state more particularly the process of making up my mind to the tenets you advocate, and the manner in which, with Priestley, I escape unhurt from the test of Macgowan.

I am, SIR, Your sincere Friend, and Well-wisher,

J. S.

WHITTLESEY, Isle of Ely, 11*th June,* 1827.

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